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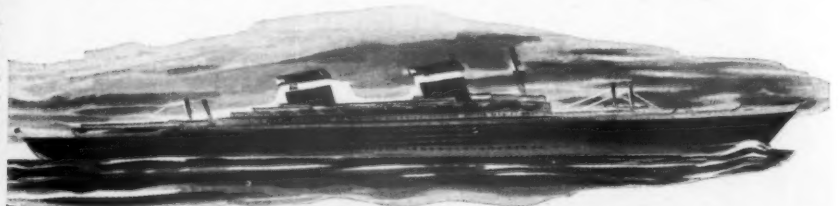
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The London Charivari

THE railways, in danger of being forced out of the news altogether by the London-Birmingham motorway, rallied nobly last week with a number of items about fog-services, derailments, the odd buffer-collision, and a generous sprinkling of drivers failing to report for duty. If they can keep this up, the skids and collisions on M1 will hardly get a look in. One British Railways spokesman, asked for his views on the non-appearance of guards and motormen to operate trains, said that such incidents were "the exception rather than the rule," and I think this showed some slight lack of initiative. Once the absentees actually outnumber the men who turn up, the railways can call the headlines their own.

The Tail-waggers

IT must seem wryly comical to Mr. Gaitskell—all those Labour people



clamouring for a lead, when what they so obviously need is a muzzle.

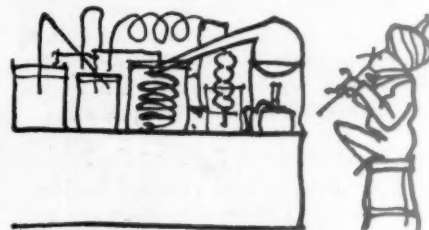
No Reading in the Office

THE Supreme Court, says a report from New York, has decided that a business man's subscription to *Time* magazine will not in future qualify as a tax-deductible expense—"a decision which will come as a blow to many

American business men." And, if it comes to that, to *Time* magazine.

Fair's Fair

THERE is to be a scientific adviser to the High Commissioner in Delhi, with the responsibility for "furthering



the exchange of information between British and Indian scientists." If this means that India is going to get the bomb, then at least we should insist on having the rope trick.

Big Event

ONE evening last week Holland's beauty queen spoke tactfully, in a London ballroom, of the elegance of Englishmen. Ten minutes later she was Miss World, suffering the unselfish kisses of thirty-six other finalists and wondering just what a young girl ought to do with a trident. It was the kind of evening I enjoy. Our very own Bob Russell—whoever he is—had flown in specially from America with his knack of clairvoyance ("I *know* you're going to give them a big hand"), his mastery of pathos ("You've no idea, friends, what it's meant to these girls to lunch with M.P.s") and his neat sergeant-majoring ("Now, girls, get alphabetical with knees and ankles together"). The girls, he told us, were not really girls but young ladies, and were all sensible enough to



"French pictures, is it? Maybe we'd better be looking them over."

want husbands, homes and children. But hopeful bachelors who studied the programme notes had a shock or two. Miss Canada, for example, who is said "to keep up her strength by eating steaks," enjoys "nothing better than a day's hunting, fishing and golfing." That must be quite a day.

What Does the P Stand For?

A PROFILE of Lombard Banking's Mr. Eric Knight draws attention to his initials "E.J.C.P.L." and adds "the fifth, recently acquired, standing for Lombard." I do not know what the process of initial-acquisition is. Did the Bank's chaplain have to re-christen Mr. Knight, or was it done by deed-poll, or does it just go with the job, so that if there is ever one of those mysterious city revolutions one reads about and Mr. Knight gets voted out of office the initial goes to his successor? If the pretty fancy spreads, Mr. Clore is going to need a four-line signature.

Ill-Will to Men

AFTER the "sick" Christmas-card, the sick Christmas-presents. I see that the November issue of *Playboy*, a Chicago magazine with one finger on the fitful pulse of the beat generation, includes some advertisements that may well cause Messrs. Jules Feiffer and Mort Sahl themselves to turn pale. For example, "for your office desk," there is a "Mysterious Little Black Box." It "just sits there—quiet, sinister, waiting for you or your visitor to throw the switch on. Then, suddenly, it

comes to life, with a whir of power—twitching and jumping as if a demented genie were locked inside. Slo-o-o-wly the lid rises. From beneath emerges a pale, clutching hand. The hand grabs the switch, pushes it to 'off,' quickly disappears back in the box. The lid slams shut. Once again, all is quiet . . . Guaranteed to unnerve or money back." There are "handsome, handy, hilarious Dopey Jars . . . labelled OPIUM, HEROIN and COCAINE. Fill with candy, snacks or cigarettes . . . then wait for the laughs." Ring them crazy jingle bells.

Thwarted Siffleur

MUSICAL honours are "accorded" to jolly good fellows, but the musical insult, exemplified by the London Transport ticket-collector who was told to stop whistling "Colonel Bogey" at passengers, is new. Instead of making amends to the traveller who complained by giving him "See the Conquering Hero Comes" or "A Fine Old English Gentleman," the offender switched to "Blaze Away," which brought another protest. Now he is silent by order and says he feels all tensed up. I should have thought the Board could have cashed in on his attainments; with a decent repertory he could have been an asset, cheering the customers with "We Shall Know Each Other Better When the Mists Have Rolled Away" on foggy mornings



"Voted Tory, contracted out of Union levies, and supports payment of wages by cheque."

The fourth in the series of drawings in colour by Hewison, "As They Might have Been," will appear next week. The subject is:

GRAHAM GREENE

or "Abide with Me" when they have to get out and wait for a relief train.

The Establishment Story

ANOTHER enchanting function I attended last week was the showing to an audience of B.B.C. executives, of a splendid film in which the B.B.C. has telescoped all the activities of its innumerable branches into a span of sixty-eight minutes. To any outsider, much of it was bewildering; behind the scenes, it seems, someone is always throwing a switch, operating a tape-recorder, speaking on two telephones at once or shouting in a manner most uncharacteristic of Broadcasting House. I felt very humble to think that so much had to be done simply to allow me to listen to a record of Cliff Richard on Saturday morning. There were two nasty moments: one was a shot of the choir singing a hymn in the Epilogue *sitting down*; the other was a glimpse of a news-reader smoking between the items of his bulletin. Not on television, of course.

Not with a Bang

WHEN Mr. Rupert Speir, M.P., announced that his new anti-noise Bill would be chiefly aimed at the person "who deliberately sets out to make a noise" my first thought was that if the Bill becomes law the cases are going to be pretty hard to prove. The standard defence will be that the noise was incidental, never a motive in itself. A motor-cyclist wants to accelerate; if he splits a few nearby ear-drums in the process is it his fault? I advise Mr. Speir to concentrate on the enjoyment angle. Did the noise-maker enjoy making the noise? Guilty.

Words and Figures Differ?

A CAIRO dispatch says that Mr. Khrushchev has offered President Nasser "a blank cheque" to help with the cost of "the £400,000,000 Aswan High Dam." I hope to hear any day now whether even Nasser has had the gall to fill it in for £400,000,000.

— MR. PUNCH



"Ils ne passeront pas."

A Very Nearly Grand Opera (Founded on a Folk Tale)

PUNCH'S BRITISH MUSICALS

INGENUA, by A. P. H.

SCENE—*The Mayor's Parlour at the Town Hall, Buxton. A buffet loaded with refreshments. The MAYOR Cuthbert Hash, and his MAYORESS, wear their chains of office. The ALDERMEN (furry robes) and COUNCILLORS (black velvet) and their Ladies are saluting the new MAYOR on his inauguration day.*

ALDERMAN BLOW:

Here's a health to our new Mayor,
Who will finely fill the Chair!

CHORUS: Our Mayor—Cuthbert Hash!

Let us too salute the Mayoress,
To all charms and virtues heiress!

CHORUS: The Mayoress—Emma Ingenua Hash!

(drinking madly) Hooray! Hooray!

Our cheers are true and thorough.

How brave a day

For our beloved Borough!

(The CHORUS instantly scuttle off the stage, the MAYOR not even bothering to reply)

MAYOR:

Thank God that our dear guests have gone away!

Now for the serious business of the day.

(He pulls out a LITTLEGO coupon and sets to work at his Pools, assisted by a pile of newspapers)

ARIA

Eight draws in a line—

It should be easy.

With a brain like mine

It should be easy.

"The odds" they shriek

"Are one thousand million to one!"

But every week

Somehow it's done.

Charladies do it with a pin;

Policemen—plumbers—always win,

Then why not I?

So hard I try.

But anyhow it's fun.

MAYORESS *(gently, looking over his shoulder):*

Now you're the Mayor, give it up, my dear.

Something for Nothing's not the thing for you.

MAYOR *(inflamed):*

"Something for Nothing?" That is queer to hear.

This is the hardest work I ever do—

These noughts and crosses—all these blasted "perms"

That breed and wriggle in the brain like worms!

Nor is the time for your advice opportune;

To be the Mayor costs a man a fortune.

(resuming his labours)

Southampton never wins a match Away.

But Reading—

(Enter, in a state of great excitement, the TOWN CLERK, followed by a beaming stranger)

TOWN CLERK:

Your Worship, you'll forgive me when you know—

Here is a gentleman from LITTLEGO!

MAYOR *(leaping to his feet)*

From LITTLEGO? Is this the day

For which so many millions pray?

THE G. FROM L. *(producing a coupon)*

Yes, Mayor Hash—though not, I fear, for you.

Can you direct me to a Hash called Hugh?

MAYORESS:

Hugh Hash? Our son!

G. FROM L. *(violently shaking hands with both)*

Well done! Well done!

Prepare yourselves! Unlikely though it sounds

Your son has won two hundred thousand pounds.

MAYOR AND MAYORESS:

Our boy? Oh, joy!

(Prolonged musical extravaganza, during which the MAYOR and MAYORESS exhibit in rapid succession stupefaction, incredulity, extreme felicity, and seemingly mayoral restraint)

MAYORESS *(at last):*

Oh, what a birthday this will be!

G. FROM L. A birthday, did you say?

MAYORESS:

Why, yes—our little Hugh, you see,

Is twenty-one to-day.

G. FROM L. *(beats his brow in sorrow):*

To-day? To-day! Would I were dead!

I must withdraw what I have said.
For minors, by our rigid rules,
May not put money in the Pools:
And when this coupon he did fill
Your little Hugh was twenty still.

(cheerfully)

But courage, both! You're in your prime.
Farewell! and better luck next time!

(Pockets coupon and exit)

(A long piece of tragic music—the MAYORESS weeps)

MAYOR (at last, showing great control):

Two hundred thousand pounds is quite a lot:
He will be disappointed, will he not?

(mildly)

How sad that none corrected in your youth
Your fatal trick of blurting out the truth!

MAYORESS (contrite):

I know. But now I blurted out a lie:
For Hugh *was* twenty-one—and you know why.

(MAYOR looks blank)

ARIA

Have you forgotten, dear, that summer eve
When first your passion swept me like a flame?
You hired a boat—from Henley, I believe;
We found a wood—I can't recall the name.
And there, in ecstasy, I did—conceive
Our little Hugh—alas! the son of shame.

MAYOR (nodding):

Under a chestnut tree—
It all comes back to me.

MAYORESS: Oh rapture! But it must be said

That at the time we were not wed.

So, when he came, that he might never know,
I put his birthday *on* six months or so.
Thus, though I told that gentleman "To-day,"
Our little Hugh was twenty-one *last May*.



MAYOR (now deep in loving recollections):

Under a chestnut tree—
It all comes back to me.
I rowed and rowed, not very well,
But well enough to get her,
We landed—where? I cannot tell,
But it was Heaven—or better.
I still recall that first fond kiss—

MAYORESS:

But don't you see—

MAYOR:

I see the chestnut tree.

MAYORESS:

But don't you *see*—

MAYOR:

It all comes back to me.

MAYORESS:

But don't you see—the point is *this*:
Last week our little Hugh *was* twenty-one—
So he's entitled to the prize he won.

MAYOR:

Well, that is grand.

MAYORESS (furious):

But think of your poor wife—
The tale of shame I've hidden all my life!
Is little Hugh to know
What happens when you *row*? (MAYOR blanches)
Can you not guess
How the Borough would disparage
A Mayor and Mayoress
Who anticipated marriage?

MAYOR:

I see the point. My dearest Emma,
Here is an old and dire dilemma.

MAYOR:

ARIA

Alas! how oft, when Riches came,
Fair Reputation flew!
We have to choose—Finance? or Fame?
One seldom wins the two.

MAYORESS:

As my dear father
Frequently reflected



Which would we rather—
Be Rich? or be Respected?
(*This ARIA could go on for days*)

MAYOR:
You're right—we'll keep it dark. And don't tell Hugh.
It's rather sad. I'll see what I can do.
(*Sits, and returns to his Pools*)

MAYORESS:
But mind you're fresh and hearty,
Brave and gay,
At Hughie's birthday party!
What a day!

(*Exit hysterically. Enter cautiously HUGH HASH and SUSAN SHINE, his loved one*)

MAYOR (*scratching his head, mutters—musically*):
Southampton, all the experts say,
Have never won a match Away,
While Reading, clever when they roam,
Are quite incompetent At Home:
And so it seems, by natural law,
The game is bound to be a Draw.
(*He proudly makes an entry*)

HUGH HASH:
Hush! Let all men down their tools!
The Mayor of Bxton does his Pools.
Poor Dad! He'll never touch a quid—
And how'd he spend it if he did?

ARIA
When fellows tell me what they'll do
The day they win the Pools,
I always say "I'll marry Sue
The day I win the Pools."
Of course I'll buy a house or two,
And several motors, big and blue,
But I want most my smiling Sue
The day I win the Pools.

My Sue and I, we'll ride the sky
When I have won the Pools.
We'll wash in wine—

SUE:
And dine at nine,
The day we win the Pools.
I tell you what, we'll have a yacht,
And swim, and lie about a lot—

HUGH:
Whatever you want, my girl, you've got
(*Enter MAYORESS*)
Because I've won the Pools.

(*SUSAN astounded. HUGH dances MAYORESS round*)
Eight draws in a line!
Come on, let's dance!
Eight draws in a line,
Sweet mother of mine,
Twenty-four points in the Treble Chance!
MAYORESS (*halts, panting, and "blurts," as usual*): I know.
HUGH (*amazed*):

You know? I never told you so.
MAYORESS:
There's been a man—
We had a call—
A gentleman came—from LITTLEGO.

HUGH
For me? Hooray! What did he say?

MAYORESS:
Well, first he said you'd won a lot—
And then he said that you had not.

HUGH:
How much?

MAYORESS:
Two hundred thousand pounds.

HUGH:
That all? And it's off? (*she nods*)

SUSAN:
But on what grounds?

MAYORESS:
Because, my son,
You were not twenty-one.

HUGH:
Who told him that?

MAYORESS:
I did. I didn't think.

HUGH:
Would you believe it? My mother! Strike me pink!
(*As HUGH and SUSAN stand stricken, like a two-piece statue of GRIEF, enter the ALDERMEN and COUNCILLORS, headed by the TOWN CLERK, bearing a vast municipal birthday cake. A. and C. sing: Happy Birthday to You, etc.*)

ARIA
HUGH (*not responding very well*):
Take it away!
My birthday, eh?



Now, like as not,
We'll never have a yacht.
We can't get wed—
I can't afford a bed.
Why was I hurled
Into this lousy world?
When I was three,
They evacuated me.
The shock! the shame!
I've never been the same.
Work is a thing I can't help shrinking from:
I'm always thinking of the Atom Bomb.
I see no fun
In being twenty-one.
Take it away!
I wish to God I'd not been born to-day.

MAYORESS:

As a matter of fact—

MAYOR (*putting a gentle hand over her mouth*):

My dear, some new misfortune seems to come
Each time you open that sweet mouth. Be dumb.

MAYORESS:

No, no! (*a jolly high note, please*)

ARIA

Hard is the life
That Woman—Mother—Wife
Is doomed to live.
Our looks—our health—
Our ease—our wealth—
All, all we give.
Still, we may keep an honoured name,
And that is rather nice:
But now I make, for my son's sake,
The final sacrifice.

(*The MAYOR, in alarm, hustles the CHORUS away to the Buffet, where they are not supposed to hear all the bawling that follows. The MAYORESS approaches the statuesque HUGH, and takes a document from her still chained bosom.*)

MAYORESS:

Dear boy, don't get in such a state.
Here is your Birth Certificate.
(*The CHORUS hide their eyes*)

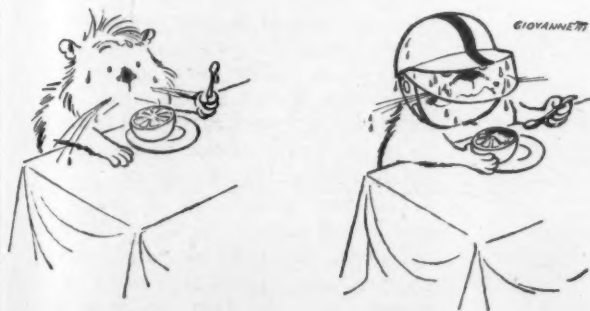
HUGH:

Thank you, Mamma (*he reads, bewildered*). What does it mean?

Have I two birthdays, like the Queen?

MAYORESS:

As a matter of fact—



HUGH (*seeing all*):

The fifth of May! Then I can draw the dough!
I'll go and telephone at once—(*going, but MAYOR stops him*).

MAYOR: No, no.

(*The MAYOR takes him aside, and secretly and solemnly tells him the ghastly story. But the TOWN CLERK picks up telephone, and—*)

CHORUS (*remark*):

Although, of course, we're not supposed to hear,
The situation's absolutely clear.
How odd to think they think we do not know!
We heard the tender secret long ago.
But how will that poor stripling meet the news?
Will he go mad—or simply take to booze?

HUGH (*astonishing all, breaks into loud laughter and claps the MAYOR on the back*):

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Good old Papa!
I'm glad my Dad was such a lad—
I find it fine—and funny.

(*turns to MAYORESS*)

But, mother dear, you need not fear—
For your sweet sake I shall forget the money.
(*Sensation*)

MAYORESS:

O noble boy!

CHORUS:

As noble as his mother!
Thus one good deed can generate another.

SUSAN (*mildly*):

I hope that somebody will think of me.

ALL:

Oh, we agree. We utterly agree.
This noble deed we deprecate.

TOWN CLERK:

And anyhow it's now too late.

(*Enter, to Solemn Music, the GENTLEMAN FROM LITTLEGO, bearing on a silver salver a monstrous Cheque. The MAYORESS shows him the Birth Certificate. Satisfied, he hands the Cheque to the MAYOR, who formally presents it to HUGH and SUSAN*)

MAYOR:

I should, no doubt, begin with this preamble:
"Here is the fruit of a disgraceful gamble."
But then, of homilies I am not fond:
Besides, it might have been a Premium Bond.
It is but rarely, all the preachers yell,
That Wealth and Happiness together dwell.
In my experience they often do.
At all events, dear two, good luck to you!

(*Embraces everywhere. In the final Tableau all bow, or curtsy, to the MAYORESS, Ingenua*)

ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS, ETC.:

We must express the general joy
When Fortune smiles on Girl and Boy.
The Moral is—In Age or Youth
Be not afraid to tell the Truth.

☆

Next Week :

"The Pelt of the Celt," by Gwyn Thomas

Sublime Porte and Velvet Gloves

By H. F. ELLIS

IT cannot happen of course. There is no going back. But who, with any sense of history or faintest flicker of romanticism, could suppress a small thrill of excitement at last week's news from Ankara of a move to restore the Ottoman dynasty? "A very well known Turkish personality," so the story went, had been writing letters to members of the dynasty, including ex-King Farouk, "informing them that the situation in Turkey was now ripe for a restoration of both the Sultanate and the Muslim Caliphate."

Imagine that! Sultans in Constantinople again. The Sublime Porte in all its ancient glory. Continuity and

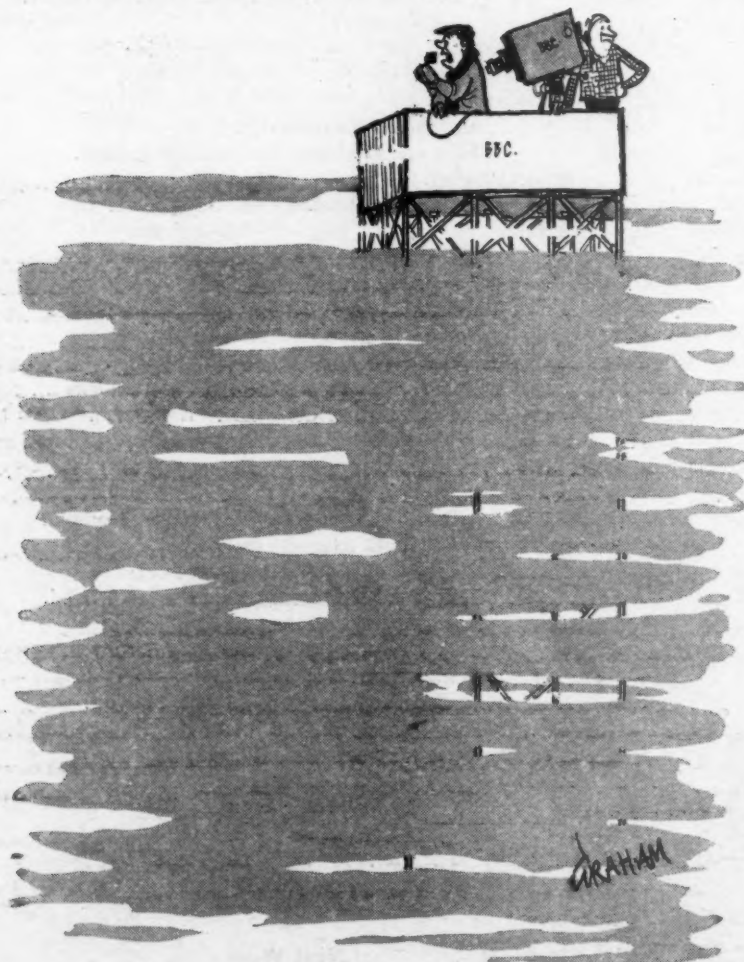
tradition re-established. The long line of Osmanlis that stretched unbroken from the thirteenth century, from Osman I and his father before him, down to the last unlucky Mohammed VI, who had to get out fast in 1922—Murad I, destroyer of Hungarians and Vlachs, Bayezid the Thunderbolt who butchered ten thousand Christian prisoners between daybreak and tea-time, Mohammed the Restorer, Mohammed the Conqueror, taker of Constantinople, Selim the Grim who annexed Egypt and with it the title of Caliph, Suleyman the Magnificent, Selim the Sot, Murad IV who sacked Baghdad—all these, together with a

cloud of Mustafas, Mahmuds, Ahmeds and Abduls only a little less forward in slaughter and rapine all to be reborn, to live again in the person (if Allah wills) of Farouk the Fearful. It is a comely thought.

Colour is what is needed in the grim, grey field of international politics. One tires of republics and their tedious bespectacled foreign ministers. Give me a Caliph again in Suleyman's seat and I will hack you out a treaty with his Grand Vizir in no time. If I had my wish the Hapsburgs would be back in Vienna to-morrow, the Hohenzollerns in Prussia the day after. Will no well-known French or Spanish personality write a letter to the Bourbons telling them the time is ripe? Whatever became of the Hohenstaufens? And the Welfs? Has anyone the address of the Borgias? Surely all those Dukes of Piedmont must have left some descendant who would be glad to take a swipe at a reinstated King of Naples? Half the trouble with Europe to-day is that there is no intrigue going on, nothing to take the mind off the utterly unromantic prestige-war between the two great powers. Somebody like Maria Theresa to veer and haul upon would make a world of difference.

All this may be something of a day-dream, but I see no harm in indulging it. Once a Sultan is back in Constantinople anything may happen. His palace awaits him, and all the Treasure of the Sultans has been carefully preserved in its halls. The Sword of Osman is there, the inaugural robes of Mohammed the Conqueror, the Palladia of the Caliphate. The Forty Curators of the Sacred Relics are still, so I am told, in regular attendance. No difficulty at all should face the new Sultan in reassuming the magnificence of his predecessors. The very bow-string with which Murad IV dispatched so many offenders may well, for all I know, be in excellent condition to this day. Let the Sublime Porte be opened!

The very phrase has a ring of promise. It suggests the Chancelleries of Europe. One looks for Herzegovina on the map. Diplomacy seems to struggle into the light again from



"Still nothing to report from here, so back to Bill Cox at the ninth."

beneath the trampling feet of interminable conferences of Foreign Ministers. An ambassador must be appointed to the Sublime Porte. A real ambassador, a man who can win the Sultan's confidence by eating a whole sheep at a mouthful or sway the future of the Near East by losing tactfully at bezique. We have had enough of ambassadors who are permitted to do no more than present notes, which are very often handed back to them unread. There must be a buzz of intrigue, routs, masked balls, velvet gloves, and fireworks. The Swedish representative must be outmanœuvred and made to miss his all-important audience. "I think, Caliph," I want to hear Her Majesty's Ambassador murmuring, "it will be cooler in the rose-garden." There are many matters that can be better arranged in the rose-garden than on some bleak Summit.

The rise of the ambassador to his old and rightful position of importance need by no means cut the ground completely from under the feet of Foreign Ministers. On the contrary, if as I hope the return of the Osmanlis is followed by a general dispatching of letters to dispossessed Houses and a widespread reoccupation of royal palaces, there will be much delicate high-level work for Ministers to do. Everybody knows that Royal Houses have a tremendous penchant for intermarrying, and that the mere suspicion of any such intention is enough to keep a properly-run Chancellery happily on the boil for months. This is the kind of plot and counter-plot that ought to engage the attention of Ministers. It is far too long since there was a satisfactory row about the Austrian Succession. There need be no fear, I think, that actual war would result, for the power of monarchies has declined too steeply for passions to be fatally aroused; but the mere possibility of the union of the crowns of, say, France and Bavaria would certainly lead to some amusing scurrings, while the news coverage, in the Press and on Eurovision, would be of a kind undreamt of in the days of Maria Theresa. All this would do a great deal of good, and help to keep dangerous and depressing talk about hydrogen bombs out of the papers.

I like to think of the day when Mr. Selwyn Lloyd will return in triumph to London Airport, brandishing a contract



of marriage between a Greek princess and the heir to the Sultanate and crying "It's peace!" into the microphones. I can hardly wait to hear who will be Mr. Khrushchev's nominee for the hand of the Infanta of Spain. Mr. Nehru will be in constant demand as go-between and godfather. And with the re-establishment of the ancient Houses our own prestige will surely rise. We have an inherited skill in these matters, and a long tradition of keeping a check on over-ambitious or tyrannical monarchs. Sooner or later one of these new princelings will get too big for his boots, and though we may no longer be a great power we can still, I should hope, bring a too arrogant Elector to his senses or intervene decisively on behalf of the downtrodden subjects of the Viscontis.

But all depends on the Osmanlis. Let the new Sultan hurry to Constantinople and issue a really resounding firman.



This was Your Life

"Contact with 'real people' has exposed Mr. Perkins at least once to physical danger. 'One man heard me explain in a broadcast how a wife whose husband had completely disappeared could, by getting a decree of presumption of death, safely marry again. He thought I was talking about the wife he had left, and was so furious that he rang up the B.B.C. and threatened to cut my throat. The following Sunday he turned up at Broadcasting House, presumably to carry out his threat, but was forestalled.'"

Radio Times

Prospectus

"You have to go to a very good school indeed in order to avoid being taught any science at all."—Lord James of Rusholme

GIVE me the very best education
In one of Learning's lofty seats,
There let me find my true inspiration,
Breathing that pure serene (see Keats)
Since Beauty is Truth and Truth Beauty
(do.)

I'll keep my eye single, my spirit
quick,
Nor, spurning all sciences, deign to
know

What makes anything tick.

My only ether shall be the ampler,
The air I breathe diviner much
Than that gasped in by a toiling sampler
Of stinks and formulæ and such.

Let scientists labour both day and night,
Their fumbling conclusions I'll never
mark,

Content when (e.g.) I switch on a light
To be left in the dark.

Thus secure in my ivory tower,
I'll show these moilers how to live,
They grub at roots, but I'll tend the
flower,

Mine to accept and theirs to give.
Intact on my heights from the world's
coarse thumb,

I'll keep my hands clean and I'll
raise my brow,
And so when I'm hurled into kingdom
come

I shall never know how.

— T. R. JOHNSON



"What you can't get inside can be tied on the back, I suppose?"

Current Affairs

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

I HOPE I know a piece of good advice when I hear one. Last week, when a man on the radio advised me to check all my home electrical apparatus before it began to take the full strain of the winter, I wasted no time. I'd wasted enough already. According to him a check should be made monthly: having been ten years in the house I reckoned that I was already one hundred and nineteen checks behind.

I don't understand electricity, and between you and me I don't believe that anyone else does either. I have a friend who electrifies whole farms for a living, but if you take him a conked-out torch he only does all the things you've done already, is just as angry as you are when a spring jumps out into the coal-hod, and just as pleased and surprised when it suddenly works although an important-looking component has been omitted from the reassembly.

For me, one of electricity's mysteries is why manufacturers are so mean with

flex. During the war it went away to practically nothing. If your power point happened to be a foot or two up the wall, any appliance had to hang from it. One forgave this at the time. But there seems no reason now, with a strong pound, and everyone rattling olive-branches, why the double beds of England should be wedged obliquely against the dressing-table, disabling all the left-hand drawers, simply because electric blankets are still coming off the production line with only three and a half feet of cable—not to mention the absence of any off-on switch but the one in the wall behind the ottoman.

Luckily I have plenty of cable. Cable is tough. Cheaper than rope, stronger than string. Cable, in my experience, survives apparatus proper. Even when I have tied up rose trees with it I have plenty in all cupboards. The same is true of torpedo switches. It is merely the work of a long weekend, for me, to extend the cable of an electric

blanket and insert a torpedo switch; all that is then necessary is to remember that when the bit of switch marked "off" is showing, the blanket is on. Though not always. That is the thing about electric blankets. They only come on when it suits them. That had been the trouble for some time with the one I have just been checking before it began to take the full strain of the winter. In a way it was exciting. Half an hour before bedtime I would toil upstairs and switch on the blanket. Half an hour later, with a murmur of contented anticipation, I would slide into an ice-cold bed. Tests followed. Had I actually switched the thing on (i.e. to "off")? Yes. When I took the flex and cracked it like a whip did the bedside lamp flicker? Yes. So the plug under the bed was still socketed. What of the four joins in the cable (one flex extension, two to admit a torpedo switch, one natural break)? This test involved switching on the radio downstairs. If agitation of the flex produced a crackling in the sitting-room there was a possible clue there. Sometimes at this point I would suddenly find that the bed was getting hot. The thing was on. As it was now usually half-past one I would switch it off, and go to sleep, wondering about electricity.

As it happened, when the man on the radio advised me, I had slept on a switched-on, ice-cold blanket for more than a fortnight. He had chosen his moment shrewdly. I took my screw-driver, gimlet, electric box, hacksaw, hammer and card of fuse-wire upstairs and got under the bed, pursued by cries of "Mind the bulbs." These were not electric bulbs, but horticultural. They are under the bed at this time of year, by the dozen, in black plastic bowls, old vegetable dishes, heatproof ovenware, opera-hats, anything. Through, over and round them are liberally-extended flexes. Plant a few dozen pots of bulbs here and there on a TV studio floor and you get some idea of what conditions are like under our bed.

Checking a blanket takes time, and the imagination needs discipline. Wishful thinking comes into it. Five minutes after switch-on you touch the thing and it's hot. Or is it your hand that's hot? Or cold, come to that? I reckon a simple try-it-with-the-hand test can take half an hour. In and out

from under a bed like this can be warming for a man. In fact if consumers did this every night before retiring no one would need electric blankets. Manufacturers might like to ponder on this and keep a watchful eye on their sales charts. In fact as far as I'm concerned they should keep a watchful eye on their sales charts anyway.

I fancied the torpedo-switch had been torpedoed. It seemed loose. I screwed its ends firmly together, and the thread disintegrated, slowly at first, then in a shower of plastic fragments, until there was nothing left to screw with. The switch separated into two bits, running freely on the flex. They took some catching. I am not a slovenly worker. You can't have broken components permanently coursing up and down twenty-seven feet of cable, under a bed, among bulbs; but how to remove them? At one end they came up against the wall, at the other against the blanket. Two blows with the hammer solved this. The myriad splinters will tread into the carpet in time.

As you know—if not, take my word for it—a cable with four joins in it involves sixteen check points, the wire in each case having vanished inside a thin tube of coloured rubber, which is itself lost in a sort of fuzz of erupting cotton-waste, the whole loosely laced with tattered old degummed insulating tape. It was the work of an hour or two only, making these checks, discovering that my roll of new insulating tape was down to within an inch of its cardboard kernel, and binding up the fractures with pyjama-cord, old sock-suspenders and other non-ductile contents of my electrics box.

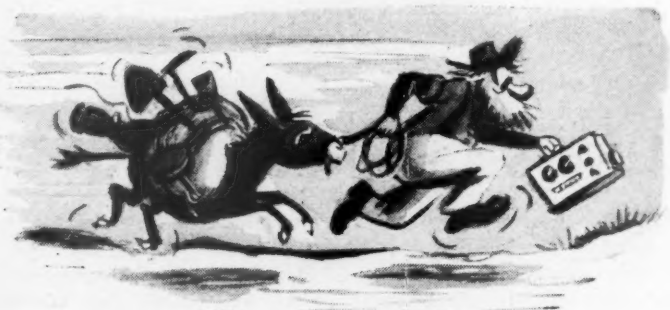
On to the wall-plug, hanging queasily from its tottering structure of adapters. One touch and the house was in darkness. The clocked stopped. Downstairs the radio died. I shouted for candles. My wife said she would ring up our friend who electrifies whole farms for a living. The 'phone was dead. I insisted that this was a coincidence, but she wouldn't hear of it. She came running and saying "Mind my bulbs." "Mind mine," I said. By now I'd got the Christmas tree fairy-lights out of my electrics box. Two years they've been out of order now. It seemed absurd not to have something to show for six hours' work.



Click . . . Click



Clickety . . . Clickety . . . Click, Click



Clickety . . . CLICK, CLICK





"Personally, I don't think she's seaworthy."

To Sit or Not to Sit

By ALEX ATKINSON

PEOPLE who have never suffered the shock and distress of coming across a clarinet player with the bell of his instrument pointing up the chimney will probably see little to get flustered about in the dilemma facing the headmaster of a certain secondary school in Canterbury—to wit, that in the newly-formed school guitar club "some boys sit down and play, others stand up like Tommy Steele." People, like myself, who have observed clarinet players deliberately blowing up the chimney (the chap I saw said it was on account of the neighbours, who did not care to hear music) will understand at once that this guitar business is part and parcel of the same great and growing problem.

The fact is that musical instruments are apt to be treated far too casually these days, and if the trend is allowed

to continue we may expect in the fullness of time to see eminent concert pianists come shambling out on to the platform, wearing suede shoes and jackets down to their knees, and start bashing their way through the Emperor Concerto *standing up*. They may even roll their eyes at the more expensive seats after every ten bars or so, and jog about like maniacs during their *tacit* passages, snapping their fingers to the rhythm of the string section and shouting encouraging remarks to Sir Malcolm Sargent above the din. Liszt himself would have paled at such excesses, and they should be guarded against.

The headmaster at Canterbury has the right idea. "We are going to have," he is reported as saying, "an inquiry to get some uniformity of style," and those who care anything at all about the future of musical instruments will

eagerly await the outcome. If young persons are to be encouraged to play the guitar it should be made clear to them at the outset that Segovia, for one, is not in the habit of rolling about on the floor with his instrument over his head while he dashes off a few unaccompanied Bach studies. He sits on a chair, and it is pretty widely acknowledged that he manages very well in that position.

I am not unaware of the difficulties involved in getting a tune out of this particular instrument. Quite apart from the fact that I have on more than one occasion had the house plunged into darkness by a friend who can never get beyond the middle of the *Hawaiian War Chant* on his electric guitar without fusing all the lights, I have myself made a careful study of the rudiments and found them full of pitfalls for anyone who thinks he can just slouch on to a

stage with his guitar slung round his neck like a tray of flags for the lifeboat and get the little girls squealing in the gods. There's more to it than that.

Consider, for example, the first section of *Folk Tunes and Classics for Solo Guitar*, by John Gavall (Mills Music Ltd., 7s. 6d.):—

Hold the guitar in the correct position, checking the right arm, left arm and general grip of the instrument. Lay the LH index fingertip on string 2 just to the left of fret 1, pressing the string hard against the fingerboard with the bony tip rather than the fleshy pad of the fingertip. With the RH index finger now pluck string 2 near the hole in the soundbox. This will sound the first note of *Good King Wenceslas*.

Now my own difficulty here was that although I followed the instructions to the letter, and eventually drew blood from the fleshy pad rather than the bony tip of the LH index finger, what I got in the end was not the first note of *Good King Wenceslas* at all. I may be wrong, but it sounded to me remarkably like the last note of *Frère Jacques*—or possibly the second note of *I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll*. At any rate, I realized immediately that there are hidden depths to a guitar, and they're not likely to be rendered any the less troublesome by standing up to play the thing, still less by jabbing the LH thumb and index finger in between string 2 and string 3, thumping on the hole in the soundbox with the RH clenched fist, and yelping into a microphone to drown the resulting vibrations. It may get you into the top ten once in a while, but it isn't playing the guitar.

What I earnestly hope is that this inquiry in Canterbury may spark off a whole series of investigations into current misuse of instruments. Should fronts be wrenched off uprights? Is there really anything to be gained by spinning a double-bass like a top? Is it worth the trouble to lie on your back while improvising a chorus of *Tiger Rag* on a baritone saxophone, particularly when the improvisation consists simply of one honking note sustained until your breath gives out? Let us get back to basic principles. Let us, in fact master that first note of *Good King Wenceslas* before we start mixing acrobatics with our music-making.

Solidarity, Solidarity

By ERIC WALMSLEY

YOU should have seen Mick's face when I told him I wanted to withdraw my contracting-out form. "But you're a ruddy Tory," he said.

"Well, what of it?" I said.

"I'll tell you what of it," he said. "Everyone in this shop knows you're a ruddy Tory. You've been a contracted-out member of this union since—since..."

"Since 1947."

"And now you say you don't want to contract out no more."

"That's right," I said.

"Well, what's the matter with you then?" he said. "You stopped being a ruddy Tory or something?"

"Not on your life," I said. "I've been moved by Mr. Morgan Phillips's appeal, that's all."

"Come again?" he said.

"All that stuff in the papers," I said, "about how wicked the Tories were to try to get other Tories to contract out. 'Trade unionists will not be misled,' Mr. Phillips said. They've got to work, he said, 'to close the gap between membership of the T.U.C. and the industrial affiliated membership of the Labour Party. A full 100 per cent trade union membership, industrially and politically,' he said, 'must be the target for 1960.'"

"Wants a lot, doesn't he?"

"That's disloyal," I said. "How can he get his target if party members like you talk like that? I'm only trying to help."

"Come again?" he said.

"Look," I explained. "I'm a good trade unionist. I'm a member of the T.U.C., and proud of it. When there's an appeal to the workers to stand solid, I've got to support it. Stands to reason. So I want my contracting-out form."

"We don't want people like you messing up the movement."

"Mr. Phillips does," I said. "He wants me and my coppers. He wants 100 per cent political membership. He said so. Well, he won't get it without me, will he?"

In the end I got my form back. A week later I was joining in the branch's political discussions. Then I went to

the local Labour Party meetings. I raised such hell at both that they tried to throw me out.

"You lay off me," I told them. "I'm a party member now. Do you want me to complain about you to Mr. Phillips?"

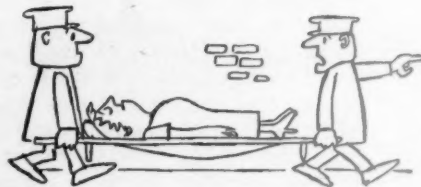
No, they didn't. So I stayed on at the meetings and reported everything they said and did to the local Tory agent. I just sat there making notes and told them what I was doing.

They were livid. "You're a traitor to the Labour movement," they said.

"Of course," I said. "I'm a ruddy Tory. But Mr. Phillips wants me and you've got to put up with me. You're not arguing with the party's general secretary, are you?" Then I got up and moved a motion demanding the immediate disaffiliation of the T.U.C. from the National Council of Labour.

No one seconded it, of course, and then Mick got up and proposed that they write to Mr. Morgan Phillips about me. I seconded it and it was carried unanimously.

Two months later Transport House called a special meeting of the party executive. It was a chucking-out meeting and they chucked me out along with seven Trotskyists from Norwood and a Leeds professor who'd gone to the wrong sort of conference. We all got our names in the papers and I contracted out again.



Memoirs of a Social Pioneer

By MALCOLM BRADBURY

A FEW years after the end of the last war the inhabitants of a small suburb of Leicester were drawn from their breakfast cornflakes by a strange sight that was repeated every morning throughout one icy winter. A thin youth, clad in a black motor-cycling suit and a crash helmet that dwarfed his head to the size of a pea, emerged from a house in the centre of the estate, pushing a small motor-scooter with one hand and carrying a kettle of steaming water in the other. The fellow mounted the machine which was little larger than a good-sized petrol lighter and, by holding the steaming kettle beneath the carburettor, attempted to start it. After some minutes of this by-play, the motor came suddenly to life with a roaring whinny and the youth jogged off down the street, still holding the kettle beneath the carburettor to prevent it icing up again.

Nowadays, of course, there are motor scooters everywhere, and such a sight would occasion little comment. Like italic handwriting and lasagna, they have been taken up by the mews cottage boys and given the seal of social respectability. But looking at these bowler-hatted, city-suited young fellows going off to work on their scooters, umbrella on the back, looking dapper and self-possessed, I cannot help but spare a thought to the pioneers of the scootering world who, in the hard years of conventionality at the turn of the half-century, faced disapproval and contumely in order to establish the right to ride scooters at all. Those were the days in which the new youth culture was just emerging from embryo, a little fragile thing, unmentioned in *The Queen*, and cacti were still plants that grew in the American desert, not in every fashion-

able drawing-room. People who rode scooters were outsiders, like every other kind of artist. There was no scooter petrol, no scooter coats and gloves, none of these scooter touring clubs that advance upon you in Derbyshire, looking like a group of natives advancing to the attack behind the protection of shields. Then dogs chased you down the street, women poured water upon you from top windows, and the machine had to be hidden in the shrubbery when you paid visits upon respectable friends.

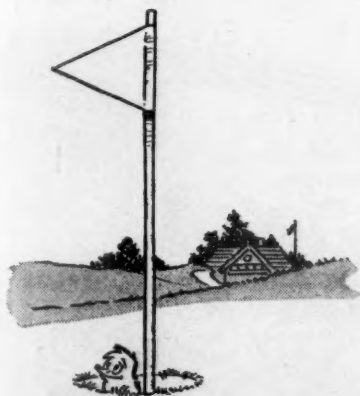
Of course the scooter then was not what it is now; mine—for, since you are bound to find out from some tell-tale anyway, I must confess that the kettle-bearing youth was no one other than me—could be folded up and dropped by parachute, an invaluable advantage to one who lived as recklessly as myself. It was so small that, when you were sitting on it in a traffic jam perhaps, friends would come by and wonder what you were doing, crouched down like that in the middle of the road. Only after a moment's concentrated looking did they observe that you were *mounted* on something. Moreover, it was a wilful creature, with a life and culture of its own; and one day when I was with it at some traffic lights, it leapt from beneath me, darted down a side street and into a café. For a moment I was left standing with my legs apart in the middle of the road, straddled over nothing. Luckily I caught it before it ordered anything.

It was towards evening, and in the offices of the Ministry of Transport in Nottingham, a group of driving-test examiners, drunken with power, lolled at their desks, applying germicide to a few minor abrasions and celebrating yet another successful day. One of the

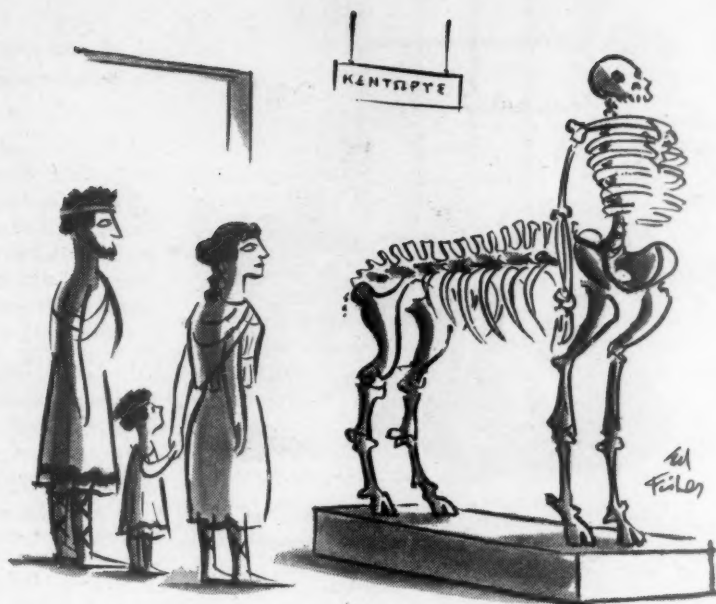


group, unaware of the catastrophes that confronted him, looked forward to his last victim, whose dossier he was consulting. "Hey," he exclaimed to his fellows, "what do you make of a name like Malcolm Bradbury?" "Sounds invented to me," said a colleague dubiously. "Precisely my thought," the examiner began to reply, but his words were drowned out as a powerful vehicle roared to a stop outside the premises with a high-pitched noise like the buzz of a sick bee. A moment later there was a tap at the door and a timorous youth, quavering with nervousness, inveigled himself into the room to identify himself as the person under discussion. "I know no one ever passes these tests the first time," said the lad. "Why don't I just give you the ten shillings and not waste your time or mine?" "Of course people pass first time," said the examiner, taking the lad by the shoulder to prevent him falling down in his apprehension. "Let's go outside." The fellow pulled himself together and got on his machine. "You're taking your test on *that*?" asked the examiner, giving the front tyre a scornful kick which deflated it in a moment. "I want you," said the examiner, "to drive down this hill, giving the proper hand-signals as you go. Go over the zebra crossing and come back round the back."

I nodded and drove down the hill, gesticulating like a madman. Just round the corner I drove over a policeman's foot and had a little set-to with the man, fortunately out of the examiner's sight. After inviting me to call at the police station sometime in the future he let me go and I continued with the test.



HARGREAVES.



When I got back to the examiner I was unable to stop. "Come in," he cried. "My hour isn't up," I replied, circling the block once more.

When I returned the examiner's voice seemed cold, his affability strained. "We'll do the emergency stop," he said. "I want you to go back to the top of the hill and then come down at normal speed. The test is to examine the speed of your reactions to . . ." He spotted a little clip on the machine and bent down to touch it. "What's this?" he asked. "Don't touch it," I cried. "It folds the scooter up so that I can drop it by para—" My warning came too late; suddenly the handlebars folded back on me and I had to be released, gibbering and screaming, from beneath them. I gave the man a look of pained reproach and set off for the top of the hill—look, why don't you get yourself something to eat? This is going to be a long story—and then pattered down again. It was raining and my Cellophane goggles were steamed. Suddenly from out behind a car stepped the examiner. Clipboard and all flew into the air as I hit him. We lay in an ungainly pile in the road, looking at each other. I knew what he was thinking. He was suspecting that I had done it purposely, to pay him out for the trick with the handlebars. I tried to protest. "It was an accident," I said.

We picked ourselves up and went inside, where we passed through the

motions of completing the tests. I looked at road-signs and said what they were. Finally it was all over. A certain atmosphere of strain still hung in the air. "Did I pass?" I asked. "I'm sorry, Mr. Bradbury," said the examiner, "but you failed to anticipate the actions of other road-users." "There," I said triumphantly, "I told you no one ever passed first time." I walked out of the door and got back on my machine. It wouldn't start, so I folded it up, the way paratroops do, and started to carry it away over my head. When I got halfway down the street I looked back and saw the examiner, staring after me and sucking at the scratches on his hands.

As I say, when I look at the young people of to-day, and see how easy things are for them, I sometimes wonder whether they think of the trials we pioneers went through to make this land a land fit to scoot in. It was a tough fight, but I suppose it was worth it. Actually after the last incident I sold the motor scooter and bought a typewriter. It keeps me indoors and one doesn't fall off it in icy weather.

☆

"When the next General Election takes place Mr. Wright, who lives in Alliance-toad, Plumstead, intends to conduct his election campaign Wavelling round the West brool-wich constituency on a ricycle."

Kentish Mercury

It's a gimmick, anyway.

Keep Fit and

A scorching summer which brought dry reservoirs, from smog, may take toll of the nation's health this



ALDERMEN, freemasons and chambermen of commerce are among the most under-exercised section of the community. Banquets, however, can be counterbalanced by suitable games.

Grace Before Gin

Waiters with apéritif trays stand at one end of the ante-room intoning to the dinner-guests assembled at the other:

*Some lack drink and canna' think
They feel so dry and fretchit,
But we ha'e drink, both neat and pink,
So come on, lads, and fetch it.*

Diners-in-waiting run to the trays of their choice (pink, tonic, etc.) as the waiters glide evasively round nests of small tables placed as obstacles. A skilled waiter can thwart an untrained trencherman for up to two minutes. Any spillage caused by jostling condemns the spiller to move a vote of thanks additional to those already on the speech list, thus inspiring such all-round rancour that after one slip a player never spills again.

☆

Musical Shares

Tycoons are in no better shape than civic dignitaries, but the middle-day spread is their greatest hazard. Let them

lunch to a small string-band which periodically, starting in the middle of the soup, breaks abruptly off. This is the signal for each tycoon to rise and run to the chair of the man for whose business he was planning a take-over bid. At each break a chair is removed and the unseated captain of industry is greeted with cries of "You're merged!" He retorts "Compensation!" and is offered bread and cheese at a side-table.

☆

My Lady's Leisure

Women no longer in the first flush of youth linger over-long with their needle at the fireside. There is no need for this constructive pastime to be entirely sedentary if the pattern instruction is modified:

Cast on, cast on, knees up in the air,

A hundred and thirty stitches,

Knit one, purl one, bounce twice on your chair,

Baby can wait for his breeches.

Nurses, as an expert adviser wrote in a woman's magazine the other day, "have very pretty arms as a result of unconsciously practising that Swan Lake movement of the wrists and forearms so many times while making beds." But that ballet has taken heavy punishment over the years. Rimsky-Korsakov's *divertissement* "The Wind" is a far better bolster-banger for nurses and housewives alike and it keeps you *sur les pointes*.

Washing-up time, too, can provide healthy fun. To recall those adorable jugglers working, as they did so often, to the music of "Salut d'Amour" or, in the faster routines, "Light Cavalry," and snapping "hup" to the band at climactic moments, is to realize what can be done to take the crock out of crockery. Time the exercise to start when the radio offers suitable music (shun Schonberg). Amateurs, who can't be expected to begin where Cinquevalli left off, should avoid the use of treasured Dresden, but serviceable and almost unbreakable breakfastware can be thrown from washer to drier-up with verve and impunity. The odd breakage, in any case, is a lot cheaper than a season's fees for Dalcroze classes.



Laugh at Winter

rs, resistance to chilblains and a false sense of security
this, Build yourself up NOW with games and exercises.

Travellers' Joy

Office workers on their way to and from the City can relieve the tedium of travel and at the same time recruit their health.

On bus trips a "pass-out" ticket should be demanded and punched. Alight at the first traffic jam, walk until overtaken, then reboard. Repeat process until arrival at destination or onset of Kerbwalkers' Syndrome (a hallucination that legs are of different length caused by frequent overtaking at pavement edge). For quicker identification of your bus in a flotilla of ten No. 11s, conductors' faces may be hurriedly sketched.

When Tube passengers are given the old "All get out" routine the opportunity should be seized of organizing a race (seldom more than 440 yards) to the nearest telephone to dictate an angry letter to the press beginning "Sir—Yet another crass..." Often the number of competitors will demand several heats before the final, in which case out-of-



breath finalists who have been over the course a few times may employ proxies to dictate letters.

☆

Vocational Bracers

Health-correctors for some occupational handicaps frequently require an imaginative approach.

A sensitive barman, for instance, may be driven to the brink of nervous breakdown by the monotony of standing still as he pulls on long handles. Shanties such as stimulated sailors to haul away merrily on the ropes can take all the boredom out of rhythmic work on the beer engines as the relaxed tapster sings and beats time with the feet, left and right alternately:

*So cheerly grow the barley-o and cheerly stir the yeast,
Away, I.P.A., away, I.P.A.
Here comes a proper charley-o, he's looking slightly creased,
Away, I.P.A., away, I.P.A.*

☆

Bank cashiers also have a longstanding grievance. One recommended relief is to detach a lively junior to go out and disguise himself as a gunman. When he reappears and shouts

"This is a stick-up!" the entire staff carry out a preconcerted routine, showering him with strong-room keys and finger-moistening pads. (Guard against the blunder made by one officious deputy manager who called the drill off with a curt "Not just now, please, Head Office inspectors are imminent," only to find that the gunman was real and had left with £7,500 while the smirking staff stood mumchance.)

☆

Trade Union leaders, half their time in conference with fraternal delegates or reporters, thicken up badly between strikes. May Day, hitherto devoted to milk-float tableaux representing solidarity and calls for more liaison with Abyssinia, comes at the wrong end of winter for a return to traditional Maypole dancing to do much good now, but many neglected festivals, especially Demarcation Day and Dirty Cargo Day, can be harnessed to the health crusade. "Chalking the Line," in which the chalker runs a gauntlet of knotted agenda-papers, soon sets the skin a-tingle on an overcast morning.

☆

Clergymen, brooding over meagre responses to organ appeals as they sit, study-bound, preparing their notes, present a special problem. They will find that Jericho takes on new and invigorating drama when they really walk seven times round those walls, quickly erected in the garden with a few playpens, clothes-horses and wattle fences. For actual trumpets and the all-fall-down effect, call in Junior. A well-known Dean of Peculiar used to rehearse the flight from Sodom on the tennis lawn, casting his housekeeper as Lot's Wife in a variation of the child's game "Statues"; when she looked round she was deemed to have turned into a pillar of salt and allowed to get on with the cooking.

☆

Some apparatus may be necessary for chair-happy workers without the means to hand. One random example from a crowded market is the "Dig This Crazy Garden" kit. This offers two square feet of fibre in a chromium-kerbed container with stainless aluminium spade to turn it over and over, indoors. In the "Wisley" sets convincing knitted dandelion, sow-thistle and Husbandman's Hugaboo are fed into the fibre by a dainty dispenser.

— LESLIE MARSH



A Distracting Episode

2. Tedious Civilities

By R. G. G. PRICE

AFTER Mr. Hodges had called to tell us that we had won £215,735, I think it was, in a Football Pool, there were a few days before the party to which he had invited us. I had plenty to do in the Dramatic Society, mainly hearing the cast rehearse their lines. The casting committee had given the male lead in *Look Back in Anger* to Hamilton Green, and a long succession of clerical parts had given his voice intonations that were unsuitable for Jimmy Porter, whom I see as only very intermittently sepulchral. Elfrida was engaged on mastering the preparation of rosemary pie.

The celebration party was held in a large flashy sort of hotel and I felt it might leave a bad impression on some of the guests we were bringing. Even in the lift Aunt Julia-Ann was querulous.

"Why can't they have advertisements in the lift as they do at the tube stations?" she complained.

To pass the time while we rose to the penthouse she urged us to think of towns beginning with L. As we left the lift we were met by Mr. Hodges and a

number of other people, who appeared to have been at the party for a considerable time already. He was standing with a woman he treated with great deference. She was called Mary Glynne and he introduced Elfrida to her instead of her to Elfrida. The incident was distasteful. One does not win an M.B.E. for spreading a knowledge of Old English Cookery through half a county only to be treated informally in public.

Our daughter, Hroswitha, whom Mr. Hodges seemed surprised to see, though surely children have as much right as adults to enjoy festivities, said "I am sure I have seen Mary Glynne's face on a poster," and presently recalled that this had shown her being wooed by an ape that, in Jekyll and Hyde fashion, was turning into a Martian.

"You were purplish and fuzzy round the edges," Hroswitha reminded her, and Mary Glynne said, lamely we all thought, that she never looked at posters.

Pamela's grannie, to whom Hroswitha was returning hospitality, said in a rather harsh Scotch voice "Do we

entertain ourselves or are we entertained? Is it to be forfeits or a conjurer?"

"Shall we look for some food first?" suggested a rather stately looking man who seemed to be of higher rank than Mr. Hodges. At this moment a number of flash-bulbs went off. Mary Glynne moved across to me and there was that in her manner that made me drag Elfrida between us. Mr. Hodges whispered that the cheque would be presented later, though I should have imagined it would have been much simpler and cheaper to have paid it straight into my account. Then he returned to his normal ringing voice, and said "Let us meet some of the other big prize-winners, though none of them has been as lucky as you."

I had not realized that accepting the invitation would involve fraternizing with strangers and I felt annoyed: my first duty was to the people I had collected and brought with me. A Hugh Lingleton was led up and when he thrust his red, hairy face towards mine I could not help withdrawing slightly. To show I did not wish to be discourteous to a man I had, in a way, beaten, I asked him whether he were related to a Tom Lingleton my cousin Peter used to employ for odd decorating jobs at Shanklin.

Meanwhile Elfrida had been forced into proximity with a small, goat-faced woman who shared the second prize, and who explained, without the formality of an introduction, that the win would make it financially possible for her to cast off her husband.

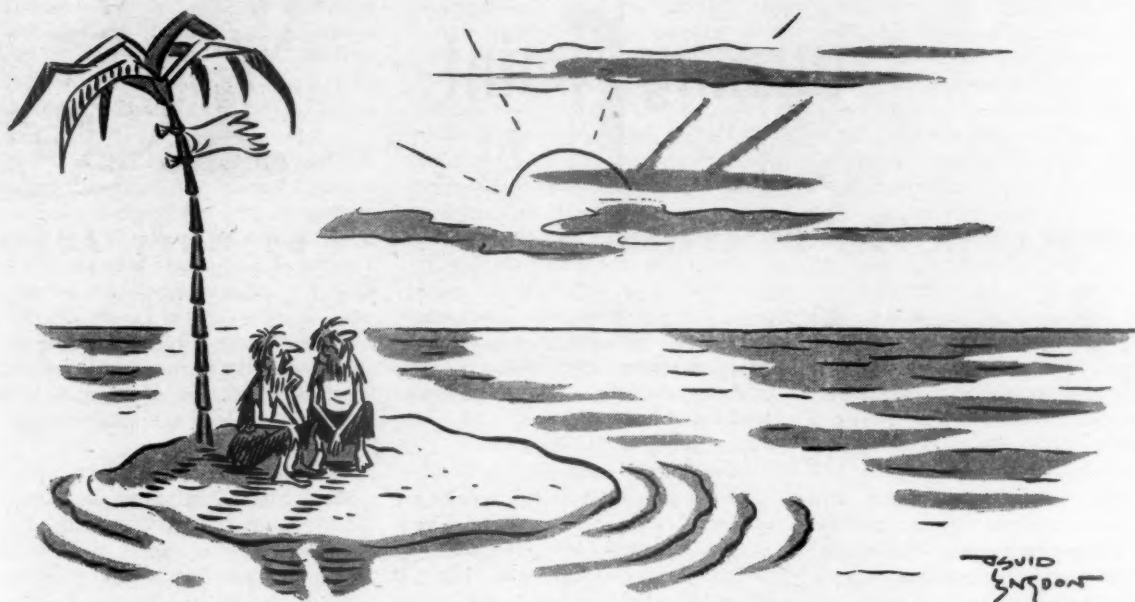
"He's worse than a mill-stone; he's an albatross," she said and proceeded to describe the way he kept pipe-cleaners down the backs of books.

Luckily Hroswitha had been off exploring and had found a vacant supper table, where we joined her. We were pestered during the meal by people wishing to move us to the top table and photograph us smiling, but our friend and neighbour Sidney Jackson was telling us about a City Livery Company where the turtle soup was served by halberdiers, and by the dessert Paymaster Lidd had got us all keenly interested in a verse-making game.

When we had exhausted the food, and good food it was, if not of the sort one would wish to copy at home, the new curate, who was High Church and not shy, intoned a fourth-century grace.



"It's my hundredth imposition, sir."



"There they go—sipping their damned martinis."

We were now feeling mellower and were trapped into mounting a platform. Mary Glynne made a speech about being happy to spread happiness by giving us our winnings. Sidney Jackson, who has always maintained that dialectic is the making of a festivity, chipped in with the point that if our forecast had been correct the cheque must be ours to begin with and could be presented but not given. Mary Glynne seemed inexperienced with hecklers and merely raised her voice to read on through a typescript which in one place referred to us as "typical."

When at last I received the cheque I verified the figures and called for the Mr. Williams who had signed it, intending to ask a few questions about his signature as Mr. Hodges had tried, when he called on us, to ask questions of me. However, several of the bystanders seemed to know Mr. Williams and accepted the signature as genuine. I had not prepared a speech, not quite realizing that I should find myself standing before a microphone instead of relaxing and enjoying myself. However,

I remembered a composition that Elfrida and I had hammered out when our doctor retired and I seconded the vote of thanks to Sir Charles Noad who had presented him with the canteen of cutlery. It needed adaptation here and there and I think on looking back that four aphorisms were too many; but I had not been provided with any advance warning and I did my best.

Dancing followed and I had to work my way through the female members of our party. Before long it was Hros-witha's bedtime and we left. Mr. Hodges and even his superiors tried to persuade me to invite their investment adviser to my home, which I declined to do except for a purely social visit. I was tempted to sell them tickets for the next Dramatic Society show as a tit-for-tat. As I was driving home I found I had left the cheque somewhere, but, as Elfrida said, we could ring the hotel in the morning. I made a mental note to do so.

Next Week:

The Fuss Dies Down

Thoughts on St. Cecilia's Day

WHEN St. Cecilia's ecstatic pæan
Soared heavenwards in some
forgotten æon,
The only scale she knew was diatonic.
The less melodious dodecaphonic
Would wait long centuries for recog-
nition,
As would a further present-day addition:

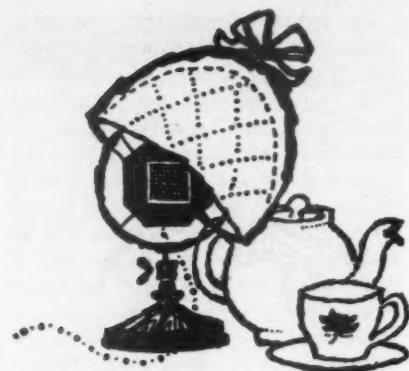
A scale creating harmony from discord
Without the agency of that or this chord,
And with augmented sevenths yearly
blended
Till March of 1961 has ended
And brought the Min. of Ed.'s pre-
destined sequel—
That men-and-women-teachers' pay be
equal.

A scale which might, beneath the saintly
sternum,
Have caused a pleasant glow: to wit,
the Burnham.

— D. A. WILKINSON

A series defining moments of crisis and redirection in private lives

turning point



Microscope to Microphone

By Mary Adams

MY turning point was when I ceased being a professional and became an amateur.

I left Cambridge, where I was a professional biologist, and knew, or thought I knew, what I was doing, and joined the B.B.C., latest recruit in a field where everyone was an amateur. I could use a microscope which, after all, is a pretty neutral sort of tool, whatever you see through it; now I had to learn how to manipulate a microphone which looked a pretty dangerous weapon, whatever you said through it.

Let me say at once that the change-over in my life was not due to any dramatic call. No momentous signal beckoned me, no bread-pudding or Freudian urge. It was not a case of once to every man and nation, etc. It

was simply the swell of the waters of historical determinism (Marx). The 'twenties did that to one. I was plankton in the current. A wave washed me to B.B.C.-land.

I was not well prepared for the shore.

I knew only the huddled roofs of my enchanted town: Cambridge. Green as a dream and deep as death. I worked there, bicycled there. I looked at clocks and they were stopped at ten to three. I ate bread and cheese for lunch, and would consider an evening well spent with a good book. I went walking in the afternoons, not for therapeutic reasons, but for pleasure. In the lab I messed about with acetocarmine and pondered on *de rerum natura*. I used established jargon like vascular bundles, semi-permeable membranes, and genetical cytology.

In addition I took sides in conversation, made passionate protests in public, and was disdainful, dissatisfied, and disloyal in company with the Heretics.

I considered no man my master, and had been brought up in the naïve belief that women were as good as men any day. You see, my aunt had been in prison for taking this view and I felt I couldn't let her down . . .

Cambridge looked her fancied part as I took my leave; sunlight filtering, young men gambolling, dons a-lecturing. How balmy, I said, the air is. Over.

Over to try a mystery. The wireless. Listening-in was unheard of in academic circles in the 'twenties. Even in the 'fifties the Pious Founders protect from looking at the television those to whom the Vice-Chancellor has doffed.

Nor was the ether a high table topic. Many a scarlet doctor would gladly have inquired with the Archbishop: "But mustn't you have the windows open to let the sounds in?"

And Dr. Gallup hadn't invented the Mass Media, let alone knocking on doors with Twenty Questions.

It's true the papers were on the rampage, scenting danger: no news before 6 p.m. (Exchange Telegraph, and Central News) although some chaps did think that the newfangled machine, properly handled, might, in the language of the times, serve to dam the Beaver brook and cleanse the Rother mere. Several idealists imagined they recognized a new nail for the coffin of class-conscious snobbery and ignorance. Uplift. Enlightenment.

John Reith said categorically, "The B.B.C. is for the People." The Member for Epping snapped back, "anonymous pontifical mugwumpery." Dick Sheppard put his foot on the rung of a new ladder to heaven . . . personally I just imagined the microphone was a new Technique in the diffusion of culture. Ah, Youth.

Technique. I began learning it the moment I arrived at Savoy Hill one sunny Monday morning. The doors opened before me. Everyone sprang to attention as I entered. Charwomen rose from their kneeling, little lads saluted, striped trousers knocked at the knees. When I got into the lift I saw the reason why. I had preceded the boss: John Reith himself, in a frock coat.

It took me no time at all to realize that (a) the boss mattered, (b) that women didn't.



"You deliberately chopped that worm in two!"

As to (a), Mr. Reith was the Corporation and the Corporation was Mr. Reith. Queen Victoria, Genghiz Khan, Leonardo, rolled into one. He was Headmaster, Field-Marshal, Minister, Permanent Secretary, Commissar, Captain of the ship, Father, wielding a cane, a baton, a pen, a telephone, a secretary, with effortless ease. Around him we were all dwarfs working with secateurs. But what a Man for a Master!

As to (b), a sharp reminder of woman's besetting sin—having babies—was quickly put before me. Almost at once I was summoned into the presence of the Admiral and presented with a footnote to my appointment: "And, if you are about to be confined, the Corporation reserves the right to terminate your contract." In the event, be it said, the Corporation did nothing

of the kind, but sent me a bouquet of roses attached to my pay packet.

This was part of B.B.C. Technique. Every eventuality had to be provided for; the future scrupulously predicted. Once I forgot to warn a fine old anthropologist that he should have waited until his broadcast was over before publishing his controversial book, *Sin and Sex*. It's always better to be on the safe side.

But to return to Monday. The room I was to occupy had not benefited from the contemporary renaissance in design. It contained three telephones, three small oaks, three uncomfortable chairs, one comfortable chair and a notice-board. I shared it with two stylish young men. One of them had a private fortune and a flair which gave him the right to promote daring and imaginative experiments before the microphone.

At that moment he was engaged in translating the News into Basic English ("just to see if anyone notices"). The other young man already had one brilliant 1914-18 novel to his credit. He didn't want another war. What about inviting a U-boat commander to broadcast his recollections of carnage? Bring him over from Germany...

I began to have ideas of my own... Broadcasting invades the home, the family. What about trying to discover something about our listeners? Do they ever listen, for instance? What was the family like, sitting there by the loudspeaker? How did Dad meet Mum in the first place? Why only two children? Malthus?... Marie Stopes?... My doodling was abruptly terminated by a boy, syringe in hand, who entered without ceremony and flitted the air around us with a germ-proof mixture.



"It's her turn to stack the dishes in the dishwasher."

There's nothing like a good sneeze for dissipating dangerous thoughts.

In any case there were more immediate things to do. "Better go through my IN-TRAY and see what it's all about," said the novelist.

On the top of the tray was a notice to all secretaries, commanding them to wear stockings *on all occasions*. At the bottom a note from the Chief Engineer listing beat words in current use, from which I gathered that mush, channel-squeezing and man-made static were on the black list, and that something called Fidelity was a virtue.

Sandwiched in between there was a script from a famous O.M. marked "For correction and re-writing." Tough. And another from a well-known public orator to which was attached a pencilled instruction "Voice test": underneath, in red, "Rejected." There were a number of memos (six copies each), mysteriously marked P.A. There was also a duplicated extract from the Crawford Committee's Report: "If the material be not too lengthy or insistent, and distributed with scrupulous fairness, we believe the licensees will desire a moderate amount of

controversy" (copy to all desks). And one letter, signed "Blind ex-serviceman," which read: "That talk opened my eyes." Was this the promised land?

On the notice board was an ominous list of night telephone numbers and Prohibited References beginning with Aspirin and ending with Whisky (branded names).

There was also a Programme Schedule indicating Future Plans. I studied the Topics pencilled in the spaces provided (six days a week; no Sunday culture):

The Future of Liberalism
The Conquest of { Want
Disease
Toil
Disarmament
Black and White in Africa
Inquiry into the Unknown
Capital Punishment
Stag Hunting [crossed out]
Litter
Automatic Machines
The Other Side of the Moon
The Myth of Impartiality

I'm sure I've remembered the list correctly.

"What's the myth of impartiality?"

I inquired. "I thought the B.B.C. was impartial."

"Yes, the opinion of A equals the opinion of B, and it's measured in minutes with a stopwatch. That's impartiality. After all, five ounces of suet pudding weighs the same as five ounces of soufflé surprise, you know . . . Anyway, those are only IDEAS stuck on the board—the only subject everyone can agree about is *Litter*. No harm in that, no ill-feelings, no one left out—and all to the satisfaction of the Postmaster-General . . . Mind you, all those Topics will get an airing in this new series Conversations in a Train. After all, you can say anything in a train—and you meet the most unlikely people there—poets, shop-stewards, rat-catchers. Rat-catchers can say literally anything. That's called Presentation. With Presentation anything is possible. The Framework makes reality bearable." . . . "Hush," said someone.

"Well, anyway, I'm going out to lunch now. Care to come along? Simpson's. I'm taking a few speakers to talk about the Technique of Broadcasting. Who? Oh, Shaw, H. G., Noël, Chesterton, Oliver Lodge, Elgar, Robert Bridges . . ."

"What, no rat-catcher?"

Ah, well, that was long ago; wars come and go; the amateurs have been succeeded by professionals; the microphone is accessible to all—Miss World, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr. K., and lots and lots of rat-catchers—all implored to say, in words of one syllable, what they jolly well like about the same old list of topics on the notice board.

Sleeping Sickness

I AM too old to dream of lovers,
I am too rich to dream of wealth.
Relaxed and snug beneath the covers
I am too well to dream of health.

I find no need to keep repeating
Dreams that have long ago come true.
I'm too well-fed to dream of eating,
Too calm to take the nightmare view.

I have no business deal to sleep on,
There was no childhood joy I missed.
(Wonder if this is why I keep on
Dreaming of my psychiatrist?)

— HAZEL TOWNSON



"It's his old Davey Crockett hat."

In the City



To the Scrap Heap!

AMID the boom which continues to fill the shops, cheer the investors and beam on a good deal of British industry, there are a few question marks and one or two black patches.

One of the question marks is whether the boom in the retail trade may not be getting somewhat overdone. It will no doubt be improved upon as Christmas approaches. But looking into 1960 one must question whether the consumer goods boom can be maintained at its present rate. The consumer industries have been receiving two very powerful stimulants. The first is the continued growth of hire purchase credit, the second is the expenditure of a part—small in relative terms but, absolutely, considerable—of the lush capital profits that have been showered of late on the holders of most ordinary shares.

Another question mark is whether the Stock Exchange largesse, with capital gains, will persist. There is admittedly no role more ingrate than that of the spoilsport who warns that prices are too high and markets vulnerable. But when equity yields fall, as they have, in some cases to one half the return on Government securities, the amber light has surely flashed on the screen.

It is an amber light for the market and not for the commercial and industrial substance of the economy. This continues in good fettle. The large import and export figures for October are signs of buoyant industry. It is using more imported materials but it is finding customers abroad as well as at home for its increased output.

The recent sharp increase in the production of steel is another cheerful sign. It shows that economic recovery is really percolating down to the grass roots of the capital goods industries. All this beckons well for the future, but even the most cheerful future can be over-discounted and the prospect for 1960 could be spoiled by irresponsible speculation and over-optimism on the Stock Exchange. The Chancellor of the

Exchequer has recently spoken of the need for caution. He is a man of few words and if these are not heeded, deeds may be expected to follow.

Now for a black spot—it is the shipping industry. Although world trade is expanding, there are too many ships to carry it. Sir Nicholas Cayzer, the able chairman of British and Commonwealth Shipping and the President of the U.K. Chamber of Shipping, made an appeal last week for worldwide co-operation among shipowners to scrap old tonnage. He minced no words. Shipping, he said, was "in the midst of one of the worst depressions in memory," and he saw no early turn of the tide.

One reason why there is too much shipping sailing after too few goods was the unnatural demand for tonnage in the Korean and Suez crises. Each called for longer voyages by more ships. Each led to a boom in freight rates

which proved short-lived but which certainly influenced plans for expanding freight and tanker fleets.

The best answer to the problem—and Sir Nicholas provided it—is an enlargement of world trade. But this is a long-run remedy and in the long run, to adapt Keynes, many shipping enterprises may have died. For the short run there is a real call for the scrappers' yard. What is *not* needed is the kind of exhortation that was hurled at the industry by our new Minister of Transport, at the Chamber of Shipping dinner. He said "We need sturdy discipline from shipowners . . . a bold, flexible, imaginative policy at the top level of the industry . . . efficiency, toughness, resilience and hard work." These are the adjectival generalities that will never scrap a single ton of unwanted shipping but that could sink a well-intentioned but poorly briefed Minister.

— LOMBARD LANE

In the Country



Tree Planting

THE forest new year begins on October 1. Serious tree planting usually begins in November. How many trees will a man plant in a day? is a favourite question to which the first answer sounds like fencing. It all depends. In awkward conditions (rocky, steep terrain) it may be under 300. In easy ground, on piece-work and with some chance of scamping under a negligent forester, it has been over 1500. Perhaps for a sensible average day's work 500-600 is a fair figure.

Some kinds of trees "establish" less readily than others: the sparse root systems of Corsican pine and thuya, for example, put them in the class of "those so-and-sos." Others, such as ash, beech and spruce, have more generous root systems with plenty of fibrous rootlets. Oak, which tends to make a long tap-root when quite young, is in a class by itself and can be planted with small crowbar instead of mattock or spade. Because of this peculiarity some foresters prefer to dibble-in

acorns—most of which will then rot or be eaten by voles, mice, squirrels, pigeons or pheasants.

But most trees, when planted out into the forest, are three years old. It has been estimated—I don't know how—that three out of every four timber trees in our forests and woodlands have been man-planted. Self-comers or naturally regenerated trees are certainly fewer than most people imagine.

Failures or casualties among newly-planted trees can be heavy. Trees planted in March don't like a dry spring and summer, and no trees like wind: 80 per cent losses on steep or rocky slopes are not extremely rare. Yet the end of winter is perhaps better than an earlier time for planting in forests which get severe winters.

Failures necessitate beating-up one or two winters later. The expression and the spelling is invariable in forest work but dismiss all thought of reprimands, delinquency, violence or brutality. Beat-up is a corruption of the obsolete beet (from Anglo-Saxon *betan*, to mend) and it means that a plantation is mended by replacement of failures with other trees—possibly of a slightly faster species, calculated to catch up with those that have succeeded.

After a day's tree planting you will probably have backache but you are not likely to be bellyaching against forestry. And in the evening, by the fireside, you can say "It would not be all the same in ten or fifty years' time if I had not done this day's work."

— J. D. U. WARD

Toby Competitions

No. 88—"Where Gods told lies of old"

THE Delphic oracle was famous for its ambiguities. Competitors are invited to provide a question to any modern oracle (Press-conference, Brains Trust, Column for the love-lorn, or whatnot) and a genuinely ambiguous answer in prose or verse. Mere vagueness will not suffice.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, November 27, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 88, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



Report on Competition No. 85

(Westminster United)

Competitors did not react favourably to the invitation to write "characters," in the school magazine manner, of politicians as members of a team. Perhaps they felt that, what with the election and its aftermath, enough is enough of politics for a time. Most chose football as the game under review, but one or two, who are not debarred, preferred cricket. The winner was:

G. J. BLUNDELL

LITTLEWOOD

EAST MALLING

KENT

E. MARPLES: He has made a good start in his changed position, and should go far along the road. He is already learning that speed is of secondary importance to eventual arrival at the goal.

R. A. BUTLER: Easily the inside-left the team has had. In home fixtures his record has been brilliant. His being chaired on to the field at the beginning of the season was a pleasing testimony to his popularity.

S. LLOYD: A safe and dependable outside-right who has come through a difficult period and is now playing with greater assurance. His tendency to wander is not altogether to be condemned in view of the results it has achieved.

L. HAILSHAM: Has been as sound as a bell in goal, keeping out some awkward shots from the left wing and centre. In his new position of full back he will have excellent opportunities of displaying the science and skill at his command.

Runners-up, some quoted in part, follow:

R. A. BUTLER. Experienced all-rounder with preference for the academic stroke. Not always exciting to watch but can play forward quite boldly in home matches. Has been known to make cuts well to left of point.

HAILSHAM. Sparkling batsman, entirely undismayed by recent cares of house captaincy. Not always behind crease but rarely stumped. Has a good range of classical shots that he seems to execute intuitively. Time he hit another six over the Science Labs.

IAIN MACLEOD. A reliable fieldsman, especially in the deep, who runs after the ball as though it were a matter of life and death. His readiness to take over the leadership after the tea-interval in the match against the parents was a commendable example of initiative. Should go at least as far as third wicket down.

SELWYN LLOYD. A really excellent cover. It would be entirely foreign to him to regard any task allotted by his captain as beneath his dignity, whether it were winding up the innings or moving the score-board to a position more favourable to all concerned.—*Roger Till*, 14 Western Hill, Durham

ECCLES, D. A thrustful player, he is always looking for the gap and has often shown great dash and penetration on his wing. Must check however a tendency to overrun the ball, or attempt too much on his own, or, most commonly, get offside.

BUTLER, R. A. His shrewd tactical sense and sound positional play have stood him in good stead at full-back; while his unruffled covering in midfield and ability to find a consistently long touch under pressure have repeatedly saved the side this season.—*Martin Fagg*, 22 Pinewood Road, Bromley, Kent

MACMILLAN, H., Captain and centre. An elusive runner who frequently "loses" his opponents and, at times, his own men. "Mac" has gained popularity with the crowd, and is always calmly confident of his team's success.

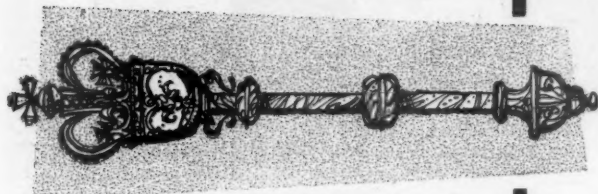
HAILSHAM, L. Last season a rugged and bullocking forward. Promises now to be a more scientific player, from whom we may expect some unorthodox moves.—*The Rev. J. W. G. Masterton*, 105 Newark Street, Greenock, Scotland

D. SANDYS. Not too satisfactory in defence last season, he now comes out on the right wing, where it's hoped he will prove a flyer. But no wild shooting, Duncan, please.

H. WATKINSON. Right back now, so that much of the defence rests on his powerful feet. Kept things on the move pretty well last season.—*R. A. McKenzie*, 28 Harold Road, Beulah Spa, London, S.E.19

MARPLES. An interesting young player who should be watched. In house matches he has had a remarkably high rate of scoring, and has proved himself to be a lively opportunist with his own debonair approach to the game. It is hoped he will instil new vigour into the 1st XI and that the responsibility of playing for the school will not subdue his characteristic dash.—*C. L. Lyall*, 5 Weston Road, Petersfield

Essence



of Parliament

Mr. Edward Heath



Mr. Thomas Fraser

WHAT Bradford said two weeks ago all the rest of Britain was saying this week through its elected representatives. The debate on the Local Employment Bill provided a platform for a general peripheral lament at the way that all industry and all manpower was being sucked up into the Great Wen. Mr. Griffiths wept for Wales. Mr. Tom Fraser laid on vigorously for Scotland. On Monday we had the rare spectacle of five maiden speeches all in a row and all asking what the Government was going to do about it; and two of them, Mr. Percy Brown from Torrington and Mr. Scott Hopkins, added Devon and Cornwall to the counties of Deserted Villages. Maiden speeches are by tradition non-controversial and it must be rare indeed for a maiden speaker not only to indulge in controversy but to kick off by vigorously attacking his own party. Yet that is what Mr. Brown, who rode in the Grand National before he unseated Mr. Bonham Carter, did not hesitate to do. The next day the woes of the West were notably resung by Liberalism's compensating recruit, Mr. Jeremy Thorpe, who spoke with all the self-confidence of an elder statesman who had been addressing the House for a generation and had perhaps grown a little weary of the exercise. The hesitations of Sir Fitzroy Maclean, who followed him and who was speaking from a mere fifteen years of experience of the House of Commons, were in marked contrast to his fluency. Lord Hinchinbrooke was alone unmoved by

all these tales of distress. He sniffed "the sorcerer's apprentice"—the back-room boys of party headquarters, and he would have the Government do nothing whatever about it. In fine patrician style he announced that it was much easier to move the people to the industries than to move the industries to the people. Mr. Houghton raised the philosophical conundrum why so many people want to come to London. That was in many ways the most interesting question of the debate and nobody answered it. Transport and economic arguments do not explain everything. We are breeding, it seems, a race of sardines. Modern man, for all his complaints, loves to be crowded, and is desperately frightened of being alone in a way in which his ancestors never were.

The Ministers did not make too good a job of answering all this. Mr. Maudling, that very competent man, was not at his most happy. Nor was Mr. John Rogers. Mr. Maclay was too easily thrown off his stroke by interruptions. But the Ministerial piece of resistance was of course Mr. Edward Heath, his lips unsealed after seven and a half years of patient whipping. What would be the manner of his debut? He did it by general agreement very well, fluent and genial and looking round with a disarming smile on a Lord Hinchinbrooke with whose threats of rebellion it was no longer his business to concern himself. There was only one oddity about his performance. He talked so quickly that one felt that he was determined to crush into one half

hour all that he had been longing to say for seven years of compulsory silence.

Meanwhile we are back in the world of Sherlock Holmes. What was remarkable about the dog in the night was that the dog did not bark. That is what was equally remarkable this week about the Leader of the Opposition. It was not indeed that he did not speak, that he had taken a Trappist vow of silence—but that he did not bark. He was willing enough to make a charming speech to the Press Gallery Luncheon, explaining how back in Hampstead his wife will never let him do the washing-up. He was willing enough to champion the cause of independence by demanding "what is usually called a free vote" on the Betting Bill. But as for the future policy of the Labour Party, on that for the moment he "lies low and says nuffin." One might have been excused at Wednesday's question time for thinking that there was a similar reticence among the Government's Foreign Office spokesmen about the future policy of the Conservative Party. Probing questions tried desperately to discover if there was anything that they did know about foreign affairs, but all in vain. There seems no such reticence among generals in the War Office. It was not quite clear why the anti-H-bomb Mr. Roy Mason was so anxious that Mr. Watkinson should stamp out this "frankness" of the generals, for Mr. Mason must have been much more nearly in agreement with what Sir John Cowley said than with the Government's declared policy.

Yet the whole story is curious. It seems that Mr. Watkinson and the Government did not agree with Sir John Cowley. Yet Sir John's lecture was "cleared with the War Office." It is clear that there are some agonizing reappraisals going on, which will certainly end up with Mahomet going to the mountain. It only remains to be seen who is the mountain and who is Mahomet. Meanwhile a House, equally bewildered by the secrets that it was told and the secrets that it was not told, betook itself for lack of better employment to the consideration of Scottish potatoes—or rather a very few of its Members did. It would not have made a good day if Mr. Bevan's television had been on—there would have been too much desert and too few oases.

— PERCY SOMERSET

The World of Miss World

THE forty-two young women from forty-two different countries who were impounded in the Savoy Hotel last week have now been repatriated. The finalists in the "Miss World" contest, who have been flown back to their home hemispheres, were closely guarded while in London under the supervision of seven wardress-chaperons, one to each six girls. No girl was allowed to make a date for the duration of the contest week, not even with a relative; and they were submitted to a conducted sight-seeing programme which would have been equally appropriate for an international Girl Guide rally. The promotion of co-existence between nations was piously stated by the organisers to be a *raison d'être* for the competition, and we were invited to consider these lovelies not just as pawns in a publicity exercise but as ambassadors of peace.

Ambassadors in swim-suits most of them turned out to be at the final judgment in the Lyceum ball-room; but there were no ugly incidents at the summit. Indeed, they had no place to conceal secret weapons, unless it were a tiny asp in the bosom. To the question "What makes a woman beautiful?" they had earlier all replied, in so many words and accents, that any woman can be beautiful... it is intelligence, wit, kindness, the spirit shining through which does it, not just surface loveliness. Themselves undeniably endowed with surface loveliness, these chosen beauty delegates of their countries were thus laying claim to the lot—to intelligence, wit, kindness, to soul as well as body. So comprehensively equipped for a happy life, one wonders what it is that makes them enter beauty competitions, submitting themselves to vulgar scrutiny in contest after contest. What is it that compels a would-be Miss World into the spot-lit arena? What are they really like, the Miss Worlds of this world, in their home habitats? Are they dutiful daughters? Are they kind to both mice and men? Since it is love that makes the world go round, it may be the pursuit of love that makes these girls go round the world. If so, those chaperons

FOR
WOMEN



were doing their best to put a spoke in the wheel.

The stated ambitions of the contestants were modest enough: "to be a housewife" was a favourite. Miss Luxemburg, aiming higher, wanted "to be a good housewife"; Miss Japan, higher still, would like "to make lovely housekeeper." Miss Norway, a hairdresser by profession, has an ambition to be a good hairdresser; Miss Germany, a fashion designer, to be a top fashion designer. Miss Israel is a soldier without ambition. Miss France's ambition is *après Sagan*: "not to be deceived by life." Several would like to be actresses, some air-hostesses; but the most frequently professed ambition was to be a fashion model. Many of them already were model girls; and the ultimate winners of the first three places were all included in the eight girls chosen to model a *London Maid* fashion show some days before the final judging. Miss Holland, who won the title, the silver trophy, five hundred pounds, a car, as well as a screen test, said that all she wants to do is to go on being a model.

This world-spread urge for fashion modelling is a threat to individuality. Fashion has become international, and

international fashion is creating a cosmopolitan face, modern but meaningless. National characteristics are cancelled out, and every cast of countenance, every shade of skin, is overlaid with a similar modish patina, and framed with a similar coiffure. Even when the Miss Worlds put on national costumes for a luncheon at the House of Commons, their faces remained international.

All over the world, model girls are the beauty patterns which every young girl follows; they make the prototype for the contemporary face. This contemporary face appears in the magazines of every country, and is copied by every beauty aspirant—which does not just mean competitors in beauty competitions, but every girl there is. No longer are there *signorinas* and *fräuleins*, *señoritas* and *fröckens*, *mademoiselles* and *juffrows*, *bonnie lassies* and *Irish colleens*—there are just girls, just indistinguishable would-be Miss Worlds. This is a grave situation, for only see what it is leading to! Variety is the spice of love; and men, defrauded here on earth of infinite variety, are reaching for Miss Moon.

— ALISON ADBURGHAM

Long Skis in Kitzbühel

THE Kitzbühel ski slopes are littered with temporary corpses from every country in the world. The Kitzbühel ski fashions vary from the latest Emilio Pucci all-silk boiler-suit to the oldest camouflage smock left over from the war. It doesn't matter who you are, or what you wear.

But if you want to *enjoy* your holiday don't go there with long skis.

A furious battle rages in Continental resorts between the Austrian ski-ing method and the Swiss. Into this, if he is not careful, the unwary skier who has gone abroad for a fortnight's enjoyment of the sun and snow can get caught up,

spun round, pushed over, knocked down and carted away on a stretcher (picturesquely known as the blood wagon), before he realizes there is anything wrong.

In Switzerland the length of a ski should equal the height of the skier, plus an upstretched arm. The Austrians have skis the height of the skier plus a thick woolly cap or so.

On paper it doesn't sound much to get excited about. But try taking long skis to Kitzbühel and you'll soon see what I mean.

The first attack came as soon as I joined the ski school. The instructor, beady-eyed and sardonic, bore down on me.

"Where," he demanded hoarsely, "did you get your skis?"

When I mentioned Switzerland he paled.

"They are too long," he hissed.

I said that I had used them for years.

The instructor shook his head. The red tassel on his woolly nightcap swung disapprovingly.

"You're the one who has to ski on them," he warned.

That evening we were shown a film of the famous Olympic champions who trained at Kitzbühel. They *all* had short skis.

The scene switched to a beginner's class.

"Now here," the announcer said, "comes the girl with *long* skis."

Amid the jeers of the audience the girl on the screen (paid to do it, I told myself hopefully) got her skis crossed, her eyes crossed, her legs crossed, and finally collapsed ungracefully on to the snow.

But if they could be stubborn, I could be stubborn too.

They thought they had won when I ripped a long length of metal edging from my skis.

"Now you hire a pair?" the instructor asked optimistically.

"No money to hire," I replied firmly, and I went on ski-ing on the damaged edge. All seventy instructors, when they saw me coming, eyed me balefully—a personal insult to Austria—until I was out of sight.

One of the instructors, more kind-hearted than the rest, told me there was a very good museum at Kitzbühel.

"They buy your skis perhaps," he

suggested hopefully. "Hang up with a label—200 years old."

But there were compensations. The good lady in charge of the ski storage dépôt never made me wait for a numbered receipt. I could leave my skis outside any milk bar in town without the faintest flicker of anxiety that they would be stolen. I began to feel that these were definite advantages.

The enemy, however, had one final weapon in reserve. They used it, with devilish cunning, just after I had completed what I felt had been my most successful run. No damp patches anywhere, which is how you, and everyone else, can always tell.

The instructor gazed at me regretfully, shook his little red tassel again and said "*How* well you would ski if only those skis were not so long!"

I had a sudden blinding vision of myself as Number 1 on the Olympic team. I heard the roaring of the crowds and saw their admiring faces as I flashed past them towards the finish. And I was wearing—I saw them plainly—short skis.

It was a pity that all this happened on the last day. By the time I get out next year it may be too late to include

me in the Olympic team. Meanwhile, I wonder if anyone of seven foot or so would be interested in buying a pair of second-hand skis?

— JOHANNA M. HARWOOD

☆

Più Si Cambia

THE shopkeepers of England,
They haven't got a clue:
You tell them that you want it *now*—
You're told what you can do.
The chintz that is your dream of bliss?
Production's just now ceased.
The divan bed, as advertised?
It takes three months at least.

How different the Italians!
They only want to please:
"*Ma subito, Signora!*"
Fortuna's lock they seize.
"*In quindici giorni!*"
The sons of toil exclaim.
You can bet your bottom *lira*
That it's three months just the same.

— KATHARINE DOWLING



"Will it dye if I get tired of the colour?"



BOOKING OFFICE

Some Poets

- Guy Fawkes Night.** John Press. *Oxford University Press*, 12/6
The Prodigal Son. James Kirkup. *Oxford University Press*, 15/-
Quiet as Moss. Andrew Young. *Hart-Davis*, 9/6
A Coney Island of the Mind. Lawrence Ferlinghetti. *Hutchinson*, 15/-
Hoping for a Hoopoe. John Updike. *Gollancz*, 12/6
Merry Christmas, Happy New Year. Phyllis McGinley. *Secker and Warburg*, 12/6
Collected Poems. Sir John Squire. *Macmillan*, 25/-

ALL these poets, except Mr. Ferlinghetti, scan, rhyme and make sense. Mr. Press has a varied voice, but his best poems ask or suggest moral questions, usually about how we should behave under the attack of time and experience. He has Arnold's knack of the excitingly expressed generalization, and he does not insist too much. Some of his descriptive verses

have a slight coarseness of texture. There are several enjoyable pieces of satire.

Mr. Kirkup's volume is largely, and Mr. Young's entirely, descriptive, but they are very different. In thirty-six low-toned poems Mr. Young follows the English year from winter to winter. They are so compact, disciplined and simple that it is hard to find anything to say about them except that they are very good indeed. Mr. Kirkup, on the other hand, observes his world (mainly Sweden, Spain and Japan) with frenzy; everything is like something unexpected, or is pin-pointed with obsessively detailed adjectives, and everything happens here and now, so that any verb not in the present indicative active is a rare relief. Only in a few non-descriptive poems, about the loss of love or our relation with our fate, does Mr. Kirkup show what he really can do.

Mr. Ferlinghetti is a beat poet, but off-beat rather than dead-beat. He is happiest in a landscape by Chagall,

which makes one poem rather like another except that the props are different. He makes, like most American poets on their off days, long lists of significant things, but is usually amusing. His satire is rather strained.

Mr. Updike, by contrast, is civilized to the teeth. Words are things to play with, and he plays with grace and skill. Occasionally he arranges them in a pattern which concerns itself with something other than words, and when he does this he produces an intelligent and moving poem. But on the next page the words start whizzing again.

Miss McGinley is (or so I argue in aggressive moods) the best living American poet. Her latest volume is not up to her usual standard, though. Her felicity of phrase and observation are there, but it lacks her curious constructive humour, and is a little sugary in places. It's a prettily produced book, and would make a pleasant present.

The late Sir John Squire's collected poems show how much more interesting a poet becomes when one can read all his work, even though the familiar anthology pieces may have been "his best." Squire was not a poet of great range, but did have the gift, rare in our day, of generating real excitement in a long descriptive poem.

— PETER DICKINSON

THESE LOOKS SPEAK VOLUMES

A Panorama of Publishers



9. G. WREN HOWARD

BORN 1893. Educated Marlborough and Trinity, Cambridge.

Served through World War I with K.R.R.C. Joint founder, in 1921, of firm of Jonathan Cape, and now Joint Managing Director. Publishing and gardening apart, has interested himself in trying to cajole printers into introducing grace and elegance, combined with legibility, into their manner of printing. Writes a very fair hand himself, too. Proud of having published, or been associated with, *all* the authors whose names are, or even have been, in the company's catalogue.

NEW NOVELS

- Titus Alone.** Mervyn Peake. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 21/-
Lolita. Vladimir Nabokov. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 21/-
The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz. Mordecai Richler. *André Deutsch*, 16/-
Café Céleste. Françoise Mallet-Joris. Translation Herma Briffault. *W. H. Allen*, 16/-

MR. PEAKE has completed his trilogy with no decline in invention. In *Titus Alone* Titus has fled from Gormenghast into the world, but almost to the end of the book he carries the memory of his home as an inner burden. The precise, fantastic imagination that created the gigantic castle with its grotesques and rituals now works partly with modern materials. There are cars and 'planes and sewers;

but people still have names like "Muzzle-hatch" and "Crabcalf." The wonderfully consistent dream exists with an unpretentious certainty, neither allegory nor escape, simply itself. Mr. Peake has created a new genre, a gothic fairy-tale without fairies told as though by detailed descriptions of the illustrations. Everything is visualised and, indeed, these extraordinary novels come nearer to the painting than the writing of their period. Attempts to pick out ancestors for Mr. Peake lead to wildness but are irresistible. Walpole? Fuseli? Beckford? Melville? Arthur Rackham or James Joyce? For that matter, even Beerbohm or Beachcomber?

The only way to deal with *Lolita* unselfconsciously is to review it in with a batch of novels. This week it fits snugly in the second place. The picture of an obsession turning into insanity and ending in murder has a hallucinatory vividness, a vividness that extends to the neon-lighted American landscape through which the Swiss narrator and his twelve-year-old nymphet make their long flight. The elaborate prose and the satiric laughter have irritated some critics as an outworn convention and been praised by others as skilfully manufactured evidence of the narrator's disintegration. But the theme of Europe corrupted and corrupting gains from the conscious virtuosity of the language and the horror of the relationship between the middle-aged man and the child gets a Grand Guignol emphasis from the increasingly wild laughter. The English edition, which seems to be unexpurgated, may shock some readers by its anatomical frankness but will titillate only the narrator's fellow-perverts. The novel is a brilliant freak and I am not prepared to be bullied into despising it by Mr. Amis's stylistic puritanism, though I admit that his attack in the *Spectator* destroys some of the claims that have been made for it as a major modern novel.

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz is an entertaining account of the evolution of a Canadian-Jewish crook into a business-man. Duddy is never sympathetic, unless other people's driving forces automatically enrol you among their admirers. The novel has been compared to *The Card* though it is far more savage and far more realistically grounded. It has brio and tells you all the detail you will want to know about what life is like behind the scenes in a Jewish school or a lakeside hotel, about the artistic tastes of young financiers and the appeal of real estate to the sons of urbanized immigrants. Where in real life the characters would talk coarsely, they talk coarsely in Mr. Richler's dialogue. Though a few years ago the book would have been suppressed, it is unlikely to corrupt the pure-minded; I suppose it might baffle them. It is all interesting and some of it is very funny indeed.

The jacket of *Café Céleste* says that it has been awarded the *Prix Fémina* and that the authoress has been compared by various reviewers to François Sagan, Balzac, Breughel, Mauriac, Zola and Pieter de Hooch. As she strikes me as much more like Vicki Baum when off form, I find this rating inexplicable. The bunch of characters, whose joys and sorrows, hopes and, yes, fears we follow, all inhabit flats in the same house in Montparnasse and share one or two characteristics each with their opposite numbers in similar novels. For instance, Stéphane is a café-pianist who talks pretentiously, lives in a world of illusion and both bullies and sponges on his wife. Even on the unexact level of "a nice read" I found it heavy going. Either it is simply a boss shot by a good novelist or I have completely missed its inner significance; it is only gallant to hope the latter.

— R. G. G. PRICE

OTHER NEW BOOKS

The Fourteenth Century, 1307—1399. May McKisack. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 35/-

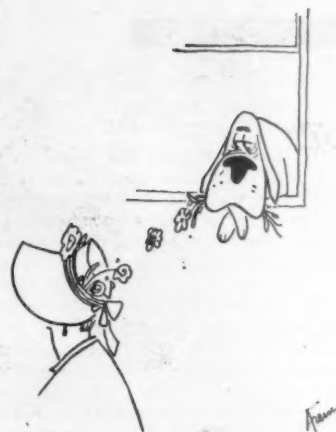
Formidable, admirably designed, with immense bibliographies, Professor McKisack's large volume may give the layman pause. It is, in fact, extremely rewarding. Austerly objective, with few of the sensational anecdotes in which the contemporary chronicles abound, here is the latest view of Edward of Carnarvon, the Hundred Years War and Richard II.

The melodramas of mediæval politics make modern Westerns seem tame. The author disentangles their frightful course; describes the life of Parliament, the towns, the clergy; of nobles and peasants; and shows a turn for literary appreciation which many critics might envy. Where Chaucer, she writes, depicts human nature as we know it, Langland speaks to us "from a forgotten world, drowned, mysterious, irrecoverable." Her sympathies are wide, though not for Richard II, a megalomaniac who at the end may have been insane, or for Wycliffe, that irrepressible Balliol man. The Hundred Years War, begun as a chivalrous adventure, lasted so long because it paid. The French King's ransom was half a million and for one batch of prisoners the Black Prince got £20,000. The key to victory was the longbow, shooting twelve arrows a minute. Modern views on the development of Parliament are very different from those of the Victorians, and it will be consoling to those who have suffered from him to find how often Stubbs was wrong.

— J. E. B.

The Return of Hyman Kaplan. Leo Rosten. Gollancz, 12/6

Mr. Rosten, who used to be Leonard Q. Ross, has achieved the difficult task of repeating a success. His painstaking Mr. Parkhouse, instructing a polyglot class of evening-class adults in the



American Way of Life, gets as many comic effects out of them as he did twenty years ago, owing to the unflagging invention of his and their creator. Just occasionally we can see the wheels of invention turning, but for the most part we are borne happily along, though the joke, whether of mere mispronunciation or staggering misapprehension by the earnest pupils, remains dangerously slight. Kaplan is all. Only he could call the leader of Nationalist China "Shanghai Jack."

— J. B. B.

THE FUNNIES—FIRST SELECTION

U.S.A. for Beginners. Alex Atkinson and Ronald Searle. *Perpetua*, 21/- An illustrated account of a tour through the States written without the distraction of having gone there. Serialized in *Punch* as *By Rocking-Chair across America*.

Idly Oddly. Paul Jennings. *Reinhardt*, 10/6. The customary elegant variations on quirks of language, bureaucracy, business, etc.

Back in the Jug Agane. Geoffrey Willans and Ronald Searle. *Max Parrish*, 10/6. Molesworth, the gorilla of 3B, returns to school and meditates on the educational life with occasional forays into the larger world beyond.

Mad Forever. Arco, 25/- A collection of parodies, mostly in strip-cartoon form, of every aspect of American mass-communication. Culled from *Mad Magazine*.

Nothing but Max. Giovannetti. *Macmillan Co.*, New York, 20/- Further triumphs and disasters of Giovannetti's engaging hamster.*

Thelwell Country. Thelwell. *Methuen*, 15/- A large collection of Thelwell's precisely drawn cartoons on rustic subjects.*

Sick Sick Sick. Jules Feiffer. *Collins*, 10/6. Curious and satirical strips exploring the defeat of the intellectual in Greenwich Village and elsewhere.

Man in Apron. Larry. *Museum Press*, 5/- Portraying the habits of the domesticated male animal.*

Please, Sir, I've Broken My Arm. Graham. *Nicholas Vane*, 12/6. Knowledgeable cartoons on sporting subjects.

Fore! Mahood. *Hammond Hammond*, 4/6. Comic drawings on all aspects of golf.

How's That! Hargreaves. *Hammond Hammond*, 4/6. Ditto about cricket.

*Contain material previously published in *Punch*.

AT THE PLAY

Last Day in Dreamland
A Glimpse of the Sea
 (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

HOW often one feels that a bad play might have been much better if it had been compressed into a single act. I am sorry the programme of one-act plays is out of favour in the professional theatre, for it has its own excitements of variety and contrast. Coward's *To-night at 8.30* and Rattigan's *Separate Tables* might have set a fashion but for the reluctance of managers who have come to distrust an evening of bits and pieces not actually in the shape of a revue. It may be that television will swing them the other way, and it may be significant that Willis Hall's two plays at Hammersmith were written for the B.B.C.

Neither of them has the drive and urgency of Mr. Hall's *The Long and the Short and the Tall*, but in both he demonstrates again his ability to create not only interesting characters but characters who seem to have their own life. In *A Glimpse of the Sea* a young wife finds her husband staying in a sordid seaside hotel with a girl from his office, sets out to wedge them apart, and succeeds only to discover it is too late. The marriage is finished. Her behaviour is not so conventional as it sounds. She is bitterly hurt, but is almost past the point of anger; she is able to see the funny side of her pompous husband's

position, and in reminding him of the ridiculous nursery games they used to play she shocks his solid, sensible mistress into a sense of her own deficiency. This triangular joust is written with considerable insight; it only seemed

REP SELECTION

Belgrade, Coventry, *Not in the Book*, until November 28th.
 Perth Theatre, *Reward in Heaven*, until November 21st.
 Castle, Farnham, *Touch It Light*, until November 21st.
 Playhouse, Salisbury, *Love in a Mist*, until November 21st.

to me a pity that the husband should be such a dull fellow, who sticks to the defensive and gives Paul Daneman little chance to shine. His wife is the fullest character, and Jill Bennett charmingly explores the unexpected corners of her cool, childlike mind; Pamela Lane makes out a fair case for the spinster of thirty-plus who is frightened by loneliness.

The programme opens with the other play, *Last Day in Dreamland*, which introduces us to the bored staff of a seedy funfair in a flashy seaside resort at the very end of the season. For most of them the excitements of running a shooting gallery or a darts stand, of pretending to be Barnum and Bailey, act like a drug that keeps them anaesthetized while they

are working, and when they are knocked off for the winter deadens ambition. They all leave determined to find a regular job and settle down, but inside they know that next summer will find them back at the funfair. There is an almost Russian sense of hopelessness about these men; and I felt that Mr. Hall has somehow forgotten about full employment. The oldest and laziest might have been content to twiddle their thumbs all winter; but it was too much when a spirited youngster who had planned to go for a factory job suddenly grows misty-eyed about the funfair. After all, there must be limits to the pleasures of yelling for trippers' sixpences. This play is too long for its subject, but again Mr. Hall's interest in his characters is infectious. The two plays are linked, for no reason that I could see, in so far as the wife in one is a customer in the other. In *Last Day in Dreamland* Mr. Daneman has a more positive part and fills it admirably, and Charles Workman, Daniel Moynihan and Charles Leno are among the best of a large and able cast.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

One More River (Westminster—14/10/59), strong Merchant Navy drama.
The Edwardians (Saville—21/10/59), charming background and acting, very slight story.
Rollo (Strand—14/10/59), neat comedy from Paris.

—ERIC KEOWN



[A Glimpse of the Sea]

Penelope Bedford—JILL BENNETT

George Fentrill—PAUL DANEMAN

AT THE PICTURES

The Best of Everything—Libel—
 John Paul Jones

HOLLYWOOD has the sensible habit of making many of its commercial films acceptable even to those who recognize the stories of them as the most obvious popular romantic fiction. It does this by taking trouble to make the characters and circumstances as convincing as possible within the artificial framework and by the use of entertaining, well-observed detail, often of a kind quite above the heads of—and unnoticed by—most of the people who lap up the sentimental fable itself. The type of the best commercial pictures from Hollywood, in fact, is a novelettish story made as *physically* believable as it can be; and that description applies to *The Best of Everything* (Director: Jean Negulesco) as to innumerable others. It is nothing more than popular entertainment, but it is made with intelligence, so that even eggheads may enjoy it.

It is about shorthand-typists in New York, concentrating on those in the office of a firm publishing paperbacks, and particularly on one, Caroline (Hope Lange), through whose eyes we see the life of the place. She is meant to be the "ordinary" one, for self-identification by the average young woman in the

audience; her two special friends Gregg (Suzy Parker) and April (Diane Baker) are the ones who have the more dramatically unfortunate experiences. The picture begins with Caroline's arrival for her first job, shows her difficulties with the bullying Miss Farrow (Joan Crawford), and traces her rise in the firm till she takes over Miss Farrow's job. Then—typical of the sort of good point I mean—there is a tiny, unemphasized moment when we see her disconcerted by realizing, after some trivial show of impatience, that she is on the edge of becoming a Miss Farrow herself; and at the end the assumption is that she will leave to marry one of the more bearable men about the place.

It is, to be sure, essentially wish-fulfilment romantic stuff; but there are many good amusing sketches of character (Brian Aherne as the boss, a ruefully self-deriding wolf—Eugene O'Neill was one of his protégés), and perpetually sharp and interesting detail, and plenty of entertaining dialogue. Of its commercial kind, it's good.

Libel (Director: Anthony Asquith) is a well-done puzzle, but it seems rather an empty, mechanical work for this distinguished director to have troubled with. Adapted from the play by Edward Wooll, it consists mainly of a court scene, diversified by flashbacks, and its chief merit is the performance of Dirk Bogarde in two different parts. Actually he plays three, but the third is seen hardly more than momentarily.

It is a question of identity: is the man known as Sir Mark Loddon really an impostor, an obscure actor who was in the same prison camp and had opportunities not only to learn all about the other's background but also to kill him when they were escaping? A Canadian (Paul Massie) who was with them in the camp thinks he is, and writes to a paper to say so. The paper is sued for libel, eminent counsel (Robert Morley and Wilfrid Hyde White) argue, and flashbacks show us witnesses' evidence. Suspense is well held till the end of the case, but there's really not much in the film apart from Mr. Bogarde's most subtle and clever differentiation between the baronet and the envious, chip-on-shoulder actor.

EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Theatre," Civic Theatre, Chesterfield, and Little Theatre, Middlesbrough.

"Punch with Wings," Exhibition Hall, Queen's Buildings, London Airport Central.

"Punch in the Cinema," Odeon, Worcester. Nov. 24—Dec. 7.

For South African readers: "Punch in the Cinema," Association of Arts Gallery, Burg Street, Cape Town, Nov. 23 for two weeks.



Jeffrey Buckenham—PAUL MASSIE

Sir Mark Loddon or Frank Welney—DIRK BOGARDE

Some writers have dismissed *John Paul Jones* (Director: John Farrow) as pretty uninteresting, but it held my attention—and I have very little taste for the average costume or "historical" picture. Visually it is pleasing (Technicolor, Technirama—Michel Kelber), with magnificent sea pictures and great variety of scene otherwise; and—this is a small point, but it makes a surprising difference—the people seem, for once, to be wearing their eighteenth-century clothes as if they were used to them, not as fancy dress. It may be that I should have been less interested if I had been less ignorant of the facts about the life of the man who was born in Scotland and died in Paris after becoming the first great leader in the U.S. Navy; but certainly they are told here with sense and good taste.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

A special word for Thorold Dickinson's striking U.N. documentary *Power Among Men*, which is to be shown at the Royal Festival Hall on November 23 as part of the World Refugee Year campaign. Now in London—a new Cinerama show, *South Seas Adventure*, for those who want to feel they are actually on the spot; and for the more detached spectator a considerable variety, all the way from Bergman's *The Face* (7/10/59) to the good bits of *The Five Pennies* (4/11/59), and including *Anatomy of a Murder* (14/10/59), Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (28/10/59), *I'm All Right, Jack* (26/8/59) and *Les Amants* (11/11/59).

Most interesting of the releases—*The Case of Dr. Laurent* (27/5/59), with its

brilliant climactic scene of successful "painless childbirth." Others include quite a good Western, *The Wonderful Country* (4/11/59), and a suspense melodrama, *S.O.S. Pacific* (28/10/59).

— RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Beloved Dummy

I UNDERSTAND that "Educating Archie" (A-R) is an established favourite among TV light entertainment programmes, and as such I suppose it is now taken for granted, like a cold in the head or the damp patch on the ceiling. It shouldn't be. It is worth a closer look, for if the example I saw the other week was typical it must have the distinction of being one of the two or three most spectacularly awful offerings at present available. Even if we are prepared—and I can think of no reason why we shouldn't be—to accept the preposterous fantasy on which the series is based (two grown men living with a ventriloquist's doll and behaving like idiots) the fact that the whole thing is badly done must inevitably mar our joy. I will not deny that the idea of letting a ventriloquist's doll appear to speak, although the ventriloquist himself is not visible on the screen, may be one of the most brilliant achievements of the art of television, but I will go to my grave begging leave to doubt it. I would feel the same way about a conjurer who prestidigitated behind a thick velvet curtain, or a circus trapeze artist who performed his graceful feats of daring



PETER BROUGH—ARCHIE ANDREWS

(Educating Archie

one and a half inches from the sawdust. And when, as an added refinement, the person responsible for making the dummy's lips move persistently fails to co-ordinate his activities with the sounds produced by the unseen ventriloquist, I have no hesitation in declaring the result to be a pathetic, weak-kneed travesty of what has been for centuries a skilful and deservedly very popular form of entertainment.

There remain two further aspects of this show which help to make its popularity so depressing. Firstly, the script, the work of three writers, strikes me as hasty, witless and uncouth. Even if it were intended merely to amuse the kiddies it would leave much to be desired—and I cannot believe that a child-audience is aimed at, because the episode

I saw recently concerned a man, impersonating a woman, having to share a cabin with three real women, with implications far from juvenile. Secondly, the general level of the acting is a perfect match for the dialogue and the plot. Peter Brough is a most accomplished ventriloquist when he deigns to practice the art; as a light comedian, although evidently well satisfied, he is inadequate. I saw three small parts played in a manner uncomfortably reminiscent of a Women's Institute Christmas frolic. I felt sorry for Freddie Sales, who is obviously worthy of a better vehicle; and Dick Emery battled nobly to make the most of some very weak material.

In a fuzzy, surrealist way I found the half-hour potted version of *Countess*

Maritza (A-R)—one of a series called "Gay Operetta"—extremely amusing. There were the absurd costumes, which always make romps of this kind look like an office party in a firm of theatrical costumiers; there was the old-world charm of Derek Oldham, explaining during breaks in the revelry that So-and-so, unaware that she was actually the sister of So-and-so, was secretly in love with So-and-so, who was unaware that something-or-other; there were a lot of what I took to be madly roistering gypsies, whose demeanour seemed more appropriate to the members of an English wedding party made sedately frivolous by a couple of sherries; and there was the action of the piece itself, so squeezed up among the commercials that it was about as baffling and ludicrous as a Stephen Leacock parody. (Now that I think of it, I'm not so sure it *wasn't* a Stephen Leacock parody.) Mr. Jack Hylton, who presents the series, certainly seems to have tapped a rich mine of crazy comedy here.

The BBC Northern Dance Orchestra has for many years been one of the most polished and efficient in the field of big-band music, and their work in "Make Way for Music" (BBC), under the baton of Alyn Ainsworth, is always a pleasure. I also enjoy Barney Colehan's production of this show, although I sometimes have my doubts about the ever-so-off-beat compèreing of Roger Moffatt. It's refreshing, after the goo and guff of so many of his rival practitioners. It is also often sharply witty. But there is apt to be the occasional rather frantic straining after an *ad lib*, which defeats the whole object of the gimmick. Still, it's a good, light-hearted show, and Sheila Buxton sings very prettily.

—HENRY TURTON



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